The Trauma World We Live In:
The Battle for Our Unconscious Processes

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The Problem of the Dance

Imagine a happy group of morons who are engaged in work. They are carrying bricks in an open field. As soon as they have stacked all the bricks at one end of the field, they proceed to transport them to the opposite end. This continues without stop and every day of every year they are busy doing the same thing. One day one of the morons stops long enough to ask himself what he is doing. He wonders what purpose there is in carrying the bricks. And from that instant on he is not quite as content with his occupation as he had been before.

I am the moron who wonders why he is carrying the bricks. – Anonymous (Yalom, 1980, p. 419)

If only this guy was curious as to why he just kept on carrying the bricks up and down. If only we were more curious about why we keep on repeating the same patterns.

The Point of the Dance

When we dance, we can really move, and for Jane Austen (1775–1817), this mattered. Austen lived in the early to mid part of the industrial revolution when the dance was very much part of society and, potentially, a vital part, as it was a lot to do with how people met each other in the higher echelons of society. So, for those like Austen, who was on the more precarious side of middle-England life, it was also about how they managed to maintain, or otherwise, their status and security.

David Daiches (1912–2005), a literary historian, wrote:

> ...if we read Jane Austen carefully enough, we find that she is not an 'escapist' novelist at all: she is the most realistic novelist of her age, and the only English novelist of stature who was in a sense a Marxist before Marx. (Daiches, 1948, p. 289)

The present article is about the powerful, and how power is maintained, and how it is affecting our world today. It is written from a neuro-biological perspective, as much or all of our unconscious processes, depending on our unique perspectives, are held within our bodies.

To be able to dance, or indeed to do anything, will be a lot to do with how we feel in our body. And how we feel is about how much trauma is within us. So, I am using the perspective of the trauma world, and how a safer world might be possible. When we can ground our unconscious, then we can learn to facilitate healing in the world and on the Earth on which we live and depend.

It can be very helpful, in my view, to be able to get some sense of the times we live in as the significant problems with our environment, the proliferation of artificial intelligence and much

more are a long way from what indigenous peoples experienced. Hopefully we can learn to be more in touch with our unconscious processes, so that we can learn to ground them. This is the aim of this article.

Defining the Dance

From a trauma perspective, our dancing is affected by our neuro-biology.

> Growing up traumatized means that survival systems are activated in both our minds and bodies. As a result, our lives become rooted in a different biological and psychological reality. I've called this parallel reality a 'trauma-world'. At its core are fearfulness, disconnection, and shame. If a trauma-world is formed during childhood, it becomes our normality, whereupon we are unconscious of its impact on our lives. However, without consciousness, healing is impossible. (Sieff, 2017, p. 170)

As Gabor Maté says, we may not be responsible for the world that created our minds, but we can take responsibility for the mind with which we create our world (Mate, 2009). And this is a kind of double bind, as we are within the world, and needing to take responsibility for the world we did not create. We are 'thrown into the world' (Cohn, 1997, pp. 12–13), as the existentialist philosopher Martin Heidegger said. We did not choose our parents, and as human beings it takes several years before we get much if any sense as to our being alive and being a conscious being. So much of how we evolve as a person is a result of how well sustained our parents and caregivers are, to what country we were born in, and in which part of the world. If we are one of a twin separated at birth and I live in the United Kingdom, then I am going to likely be much better off than if my twin was kidnapped at birth and brought up by a drug gang in, say, Mexico (Gilbert, 2017, p. 2).

My living on an island, which has been active all around the world in obtaining resources, and with a surrounding boundary of water, means it is not quite so easy to attack and tends to make for an immense difference with regard to my safety – though islands are more connected today by cyberspace. My trauma world is affected by this in part and in many different ways. My continuum within the trauma world – which we are all in, are part of and are all affected by, and which is ever evolving – affects how safe I feel. The more safe I feel, the easier it is to deal with my own sense of trauma.

It is helpful to understand that, '(T)here is a crucial distinction here between safety (which is about the absence, avoidance or prevention of threat) and safeness (which is the presence or flourishing of contentment, care and connection)' (Evans et al., 2023, p. 91, from Gilbert, 2013).

We have many kinds of protection, in different forms, and some are meaningful, and some are not so. If we have an inner true strength (Kolts, 2022), then that helps protect us in the trauma world. If we rely on a mask-like rigid pseudo-protection, then that might be because we do not feel so secure inside; however, we can give that façade to the others around us. We can have a bodily rigidity which gives the *appearance* of strength, and may well then project (e.g. see Morgan, 2021) what is inside us, as something we are not comfortable with inside, on to others.

In particular we can easily project our own hatred of parts of ourselves on to others. This can set us into a fight mentality, and the other person might flee, or might fight back, perhaps with some kind of rhetoric. We might go into a freeze, as we do not know how to respond. Or we might go into submit, and give in, or collapse, as this becomes too much for us; or dissociate into fantasy, and pretend to believe that this event is not happening in some way. There are an infinite number of scenarios on this theme. We can form different kinds of castles, whether physical or psychological, to protect us, which usually these days needs money so we can have a more secure home, with a security system of alarms, or even guards; or the money can buy someone off, bribe them, or increasingly now use 'lawfare' to sue for a comment made, which triggers someone. The more we can learn a more inner true strength, then the easier it can be to be able to deal with such difficult dilemmas;

dilemmas which ultimately involve our unconscious mind.

So, how can the concept of being in a trauma world be of use to us in this ever-evolving and spiralling changing age, when things are moving so quickly, and one layer of history adds on to the previous layer? Where human beings evolved into hunter-gathers and then led more primitive lives. To them, it would have been the only lives they knew. They might have had little consideration of what has been before, whereas now there is so much knowledge of what has passed, and is in the past. And anxiety about the future.

> What constitutes a trauma-world varies from person to person, depending on our particular experiences and unique disposition. However, three dynamics form the hub of all trauma-worlds: 1. Hypervigilance. The external world is perceived through a veil of fear: We carry an embodied and implicit mistrust of other people, situations, and opportunities. 2. Disconnection. Parts of ourselves become exiled: We are distanced from our emotions, our bodies, and aspects of our personality. 3. Shame. Our identity becomes interwoven with a visceral feeling of being fundamentally inadequate and unworthy of relationships. (Sieff, 2017, p.171)

Trauma can be defined as 'a mental condition caused by severe shock, stress or fear, especially when the harmful effects last for a long time' (*Oxford Learners Dictionary*).

Pat Ogden, a somatic psychologist, says:

> for traumatized individuals, the debilitating, repetitive cycle of interaction between mind and body keeps past trauma 'alive', disrupting the sense of self and maintaining trauma-related disorders. Many people are left with a fragmented memory of their traumatic experiences, a host of easily reactivated neurobiological responses, and baffling, intense, nonverbal memories – sensorimotor reactions and symptoms that 'tell the story' without words, as though the body knows what they do not know cognitively. (Ogden et al., 2006, p. 3)

Trauma can and is being consciously affected, indeed manipulated, by those who use this consciously to benefit themselves. I think that Edward Bernays (1891–1995) is one in particular who used the subliminal desires identified by his uncle Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), so that he, and those around him, could benefit by the use of advertising on us humans and thus increasingly invading spaces of our lives, in particular our unconscious processes – magnified yet again by the current digital age already on top of neoliberalism, where money is all that counts with regard to just about everything, and thus, adding to the increasing colonisation which happened in the *second* stage of our increasing colonialism.

The historical stages of trauma boundaries can be seen as:

1. Indigenous/ palaeolithic, where there was greater connection with ourselves, and our earth.
2. Colonialisation of indigenous human beings.
3. Capturing our subliminal desires consciously.
4. Neoliberalism – everything is about money.
5. Digital capture.

When indigenous people were living their life in relative harmony (Brody, 2023), they were very spiritual, and this gave them much emotional support (Spikins, 2022), as indeed it can for us today. As Penny Spikins, an archaeologist of human origins, says, 'The archaeological record gives us, at best, an indication of how people behaved in the past. How they felt is something that we have to infer….' (ibid., p. 5). However, how easy is it to account for, or measure, how our sense of internal secure emotions has changed through the five periods identified above, from palaeolithic to neoliberalism and digital capture? During most of that time, we have experienced a relatively stable earth, with periods of environmental freezing and heating, until the last 50 or 60 years or so, when it has gradually become more obvious. Over the last 250 years or so, there has been an increasing industrialisation of the earth to upset the previous more natural cycles.

There is also the risk of meteor and similar objects; and now we have the added risks of human-made objects in the sky, such as

satellites. All of this affects us and our world, and affects our emotions in the present moment. Our window for tolerating the effects of our survival mechanisms can be termed our 'window of tolerance' (Siegel, 1999). This is 'a zone of regulated autonomic arousal in which the information can be processed and integrated…' (Ogden & Fisher, 2015, p. 17). When we go out of the window of tolerance – that is, of being able to tolerate the tricky feelings of going out of the window and trying to stay with these feelings in the moment – it becomes more difficult to balance the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems of our autonomic nervous system, so that we do not go into sympathetic hyperarousal, or dorsal vagal parasympathetic shutdown (Porges, 2011). The dorsal part of the vagus nerve has this function, while the ventral vagal part of the parasympathetic system is thought to maintain us in the present moment, and thus the window of tolerance, and so affording more of a sense of safeness.

The Power in the Dance

Someone more powerful than oneself can make it difficult for us to remain socially engaged, as we can go into some kind of silencing and then we are rendered into different degrees of being speechless. Then, our social rank (Gilbert, 2009; Daly et al., 2015; Benn et al., 2005) is at risk, where the need to be above someone else comes into play, and then we are less likely to see them as individual human beings. So, we tend to dehumanise them and see them as the 'other' (e.g. Smith, 2011).

We then become more 'sedimented' (Merleau-Ponty, in van Deurzen-Smith, 1997) in our unconscious behaviour, as our social rank mentality (Gilbert, 2009 pp. 121–4) can mean that we lose our social engagement, and our false selves (Winnicott, 1964) can take over. This can keep us from experiencing our 'self energy' (McConnell, 2020). Our need is for self energy in the moment rather than being stuck in our trauma-energy, and our sedimented (Merleau-Ponty, in van Deurzen-Smith, 1997) state of the past is the key to a more successful grounding of our selves. This sedimentation is described as

'the acting as if truth is stagnant and knowable. Sedimented truth is the quasi truth that has become deposited as if it were solid' (van-Deurzen-Smith, 1997, p. 65).

Judith Herman, a psychiatrist who has contributed much to the trauma recovery model, wrote that,

> In order to escape accountability for his crimes, the perpetrator does everything in his power to promote forgetting. If secrecy fails, the perpetrator attacks the credibility of his victim. If he cannot silence her absolutely, he tries to make sure no one listens. (Herman, in Haines, 2019, p. 85)

Over the various millennia of the five periods identified earlier, there have been colossal changes, almost unimaginable for early human beings. And while humans can adapt, and in many ways we do, the way in which our underlying unconscious states are affected by these changes and how they adapt is tricky, as we have these very tricky brains (Gilbert, 2009) which were designed to protect us from being eaten by animals, and so we could capture them as food and clothing (ibid.). The polyvagal system (Porges, 2011) can be helpful to further ground the neuro-biology; and although this is a theory still under some scrutiny, the concept can be very helpful.

As the unconscious, and varying degrees of not conscious thought pile up over the millennia, they can cause much intergenerational trauma, some of which is very violent indeed (de Zulueta, 2006, pp. 239–41; Grand & Salberg, 2016). What is not spoken is essentially silenced, and silenced thoughts will likely go deeper into the unconscious processes, which then causes an undermining of our conscious thoughts. The children's film *Inside Out* (Walt Disney, 2015) demonstrates this quite well.

Spirituality can very much help us feel more safe, and can mean we are concerned more with the human spirit or soul as compared to material or physical things. As Thomas Szasz, a psychiatrist and social critic of the moral and scientific foundations of psychiatry, said, we 'do

not have "mental illnesses" but *experience* (his italics) a wide range of moral, interpersonal, social and political "problems of living"' (Szasz, quoted in Barker & Buchanan-Parker, 2010, p. 69).

The nature of the spiritual and the focus on spirituality will have likely changed over the millennia. Bernays wrote, 'If we understand the mechanism and motives of the group mind, is it not possible to control and regiment the masses according to our will without their knowing about it?' (Bernays, 1928, p. 71). This means that we are likely, arguably, to be tricked very easily indeed, and in a way that Herman describes above. Bernays, who about a hundred years ago used the increasing understanding of our unconscious and subliminal learning so that the advertisers could enclose us even more and lead us to smoke and buy cars, used sexual imagery and so on, which is still very much used today. Thus, our conscious choices are limited as our unconscious is tampered with, and we are likely to consume to help us soothe our false self as a consequence, rather than learn a more true, inner strength.

We are also at the mercy of the financial markets. In the United Kingdom this was shown by the recent Conservative government of short-lived prime minister Elizabeth Truss, as when her government did not consider this carefully there were consequences which quite considerably harmed the UK economy (e.g. Lee, 2022). This showed, perhaps, that it is very difficult to act in a way which might have meaning to some, i.e. to make some quick money; however, outside forces are taking control, and are not in the control of any simple conscious human force. We are swimming with sharks, as Joris Luyendijk writes about after interviewing about 200 people in the banking business environment, saying, 'if I were to summarise them in one image, it would be that empty cockpit' (Luyendijk, 2015, pp. 1–2), referring to an empty aeroplane (ibid., p. 1).

The Meaning of The Dance
Viktor Frankl, was a Jewish-American existential psychiatrist who wrote about his experiences in the Second World War concentration camp where those who found meaning were more likely to survive, as was his own personal experience (Frankl, 1946/1985, pp. 126–7).

Meaninglessness is one of the four existential givens (Yalom, 1980) of the fact that we all die (death); that life has no inherent meaning, and we need to find our own meaning (meaninglessness); that we are all ultimately alone (isolation) and we are condemned to choose (freedom) (ibid.). The more we consciously choose, rather than a default choice if our subliminal desires are perverted, the safer we might become.

If we are, for example, silenced by the powerful it can mean that we become more alone, our thinking can become trickier, and to communicate by speaking or writing and so on becomes more difficult, and it is more difficult to make choices, and choices which are meaningful. We can develop a mortality salience, a hypothesis of the need to mitigate (or try and deny) awareness by individuals that their death is inevitable, and the terror of this eventuality (Solomon, 2020 p. 62).

Politicians like Donald Trump 'exude confidence and defiance, [are] full of anger and contempt, disregard other's opinions, and make claims that, although demonstrably untrue, support the narrative that he promotes at his rallies….' (ibid., p. 65). The false self of Trump was written about by his niece, a psychologist (Trump, 2019). This defiance seems to demonstrate being out of the window of tolerance, and in fight mode, and fleeing from any reflection of what truth might mean, and what death might mean.

So, the more we can learn to stay in the window of tolerance, viz. in the present moment, then the more our life can have meaning, and the greater is our being able to understand our unconscious behaviour and what to do with it. That which is not known affects us and is stored as body memory (van der Kolk, 2014). And this unconscious, and varying degrees of not conscious thought, accumulate over the

millennia and cause intergenerational trauma, which can be very painful. Our painful parts take over, and if we are not careful mother earth will become 'The Other'.

Our Evolution in the Dance of Life

We have evolved on this earth, and when we had space apart with more healthy boundaries, as when the human population was low, tribes and belief systems helped to more safely contain their selves. Our overriding need was to eat our prey before they ate us, and support ourselves within our group or tribe. As we gradually learnt how to defend ourselves with stones, spears, bows and arrows, then guns and now bombs, tanks, planes and drones, the risk to life is potentially far greater. With drones we do not need to see the other person or people at all. If we are to see the other as a non-person, then this helps us even more to deny the lives of others. Being in a trauma world means that we are being in trauma and not very grounded within ourselves, as we are still to some degree stuck in the past, and not sufficiently in the present.

The native first nations, e.g those of the Americas and Australasia, looked after their lands in a more connected way (e.g. Singh et. al., 2022; Spikins, 2022). That is not to say that there might not have been some issues between them. Then they were invaded by other tribes, especially from overseas, such as by Europeans – although there were many invasions over the lands by the likes of Alexandra the Great (356–323 BC), Ghenghis Khan (died 1227) and the Crusades under King Richard 1 of England (1157–99). However, these were mass invasions of the generally uninvaded lands of Australia, New Zealand and the Americas (e.g. Ghosh, 2021). Some minor incursions of these lands had happened, e.g. at L'Anse aux Meadows in northern Newfoundland, Canada, which were invaded locally around 1000 AD in that area without causing much apparent trauma by the Norsemen from Greenland (Ingstad, 1969/1974).

The increasingly hyper-industrial age brought about another great layer of trauma, as men and women had to become more enclosed by the factories in which they were employed, and the earth became over-exploited. Although there have been many benefits, the behaviour of those like Bernays has meant there has been little conscious awareness of the consequences. This has continued with the neoliberal focus on the making of money, and the furtherance of internet technology which, though it could have brought hope with perhaps more free time for humans, is actually being increasingly manipulated as a way of enclosing our minds, and bodies, and time even further.

The Traumatised World: How People Stay in Power, and Control the Dance

How to liberate ourselves from the trauma and individuate (Jung, 1954/1966, p. 10) is not at all easy for our tricky human animal brain. Amitav Ghosh, who writes on topics such as colonialism and climate change, says:

> ...it is a grave error to imagine that the world is not preparing for the disrupted planet of the future. It's just that it's not preparing by taking mitigatory measures or by reducing emissions: instead, it is preparing for a new geopolitical struggle for dominance. (Ghosh, 2021, p.129)

With our survival responses in mind, human beings are developing all the time, as one individual affects another and we are all reacting to each other continually one on one, and in a continuum of enmass-ness. So, we have arrived at where we are now; and what can we do to move towards some kind of meaningful sanity so that we can contain a world where there appears to be more concern from many people as to the sustainability of their lives, especially on earth in a time of concern about the environment, and the consequences of that? And this in the context of current globalisation where we have never been so connected, yet are increasingly *dis*connected from mother earth, and have never been so monitored by the panopticon (Bentham, 1791/2014; Foucault, 1975/1991) of life.

The panoptican is where one or a few people can survey a mass of people, and keep control over

them – as with the Asylum system in the late Middle Ages where one single prison guard could keep an eye on the whole prison population (ibid.), and in previous historical times in differing ways. This surveillance system has continued to be adapted throughout time, and further today with our digital imprints being tracked and traced. How long might it be before just one person, or group of people, can monitor us?

The dark triad (Walker et. al., 2021) is 'a constellation of three socially aversive personality traits comprised of narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy (Paulhus & Williams, 2002, p. 2) that tends to form a 'blob' of people exhibiting an apparent block to compassion, and so very tricky for us to be with. Their pain seems too much for them to bear, and so this is projected on to us, who are othered.

If, however, we can feel more of an internal safeness inside, the false safety needed by those of the dark triad might not matter so much. We can see when we are being manipulated, and understand when the trauma of others is being manipulated by those in power for their own ends so that the few can control the discourse (see, for example, Morgan, 2019 & 2021; Younis, 2023).

There are differing degrees, on a continuum, of how we learn to be social, and to play as children (Robinson, 2020). In the UK, in Eton and Oxford University, and in other boarding schools and universities, some needed to survive in a place where they did not choose to be, as they were young and still developing as individuals, and where some of the powerful, like politicians, were taught (Duffell, 2014/2017). And this sense of insecure attachment learning (Gerhardt, 2010), especially if not able to be put into words, then becomes re-enacted unconsciously. Indeed, the dark triad can be within us all, as we all have different degrees of pain, too much to bear and re-enacted on a continuum, as the missing experiences and resources of learning to trust ourselves in a secure attachment are not sufficiently present for us (Ogden & Fisher, 2015, p. 392). So, there is a need to learn an internal sense of trusting ourself, and then we

will not need to project this part of ourselves on to others

Learning to Dance

The Buddha told about the eight-fold path of right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration (Huxter, 2016; Germer et al., 2005, pp. 292–3). However, 'Being traumatized means continuing to organize your life as if the trauma were still going on – unchanged and immutable – as every new encounter or event is contaminated by the past' (van der Kolk, 2014). This makes it difficult to be on the aforementioned eight-fold path. And this is what we are doing if we are not careful – just re-enacting the same patterns of behaviour from the trauma, rather than being in touch with our energised self, i.e. our own 'self energy'.

As we enter this trauma world during childhood, and these resulting distortions become our normality, we then have little choice but to behave in ways that create repetitive and self-perpetuating cycles. 'There is no conscious decision to enter a trauma-world; rather it is what human brains and bodies have evolved to do in the face of overwhelming pain or fear' (Sieff, 2017, p. 171).

So, we can learn a greater consciousness, and so to be with the pain, and to understand our protector parts which help to protect our ego. Protector parts are there as psychological internal parts of our selves, to protect us from our vulnerable painful memories which we essentially exile (Schwartz, 2021). Again, the film *Inside Out* can help to clarify this concept. However, the main cause of the emotional pain we experience can be let go of when we are ready to do so (see, for example, Schwartz, 2021; McConnell, 2020; Fisher, 2017), and done with care. This particularly applies to our shame as learnt when a child, when we did not know any better. As Sieff says, 'we may intensify our efforts to control others, hoping to prevent them from doing anything that could inadvertently expose our shame' (Sieff, 2017, p. 179). However, 'Sadly 'the fact remains that the only

person we can take responsibility for is our self' (Woodman & Dickson, in Seif, 2017, p. 180).

How to Dance

How can we become more grounded, at a time when we are at great risk of losing the ground beneath our feet, as environmental catastrophe causes even more destruction with fires, floods, continuing war, economic chaos and contagious disease?

As the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein said, 'You learned the *concept* pain when you learned language' (Wittgenstein, 1953, note 384), and '…philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday' (ibid., note 38).

Yes, language and how we express ourselves are the key to our trauma world so that we can express our pain. And this needs compassionate motivation (Gilbert, 2020) so that 'It is the motivation to be caring that is crucial. Without a caring motive, empathy can be used for selfish, deceptive, and manipulative goals.' (Bloom, 2017, in Gilbert, 2020). We need, perhaps,

> …a certain confidence, knowledge, and skill: confidence that I *can* be useful; wisdom about *how* to be useful in the particular situation; and the skills, tools, or resources to actually carry this out. And even with all these qualities, it still might take some time, so for this intention to be helpful is also likely to require patience, persistence, and dedication. (Herriott-Maitland & Longden, 2022, p. 27)

Karl Marx said, 'The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas….' (Marx, 1845/1968). And while Adam Smith wrote about the 'invisible hand of capitalism' (Smith, 1776), it needs to be a compassionately motivated hand, and one with the eight-fold path for safeness, rather than safety (where 'safeness' connotes an internally felt feeling, whereas 'safety' is essentially a set of rules, i.e. a verbal construct). We need to ground our unconscious minds and develop more self energy rather than the disembodied energy of trauma. Otherwise, we become 'an appendage of the machine' (Marx, 1848). We need to bring our social engagement

system (Porges, 2011) into flow, rather than being blocked by those who project their pain on to us and block our flow.

We cannot afford to carry on like this, eventually amusing ourselves to death (Postman, 1985). This 'amusing ourselves to death' is killing the planet.

We can find our own building-blocks of self-worth (Daigneault & Brown, 2023) and spirituality, and so assist our unconscious sense of being grounded. Many people, like Nelson Mandela (Mandela, 1994), Mohatma Ghandi (1948/1993), Mena Suvari (2021) and Rizwaan Sabir (2022), have however managed to find this, in the struggle with the darkness – as they struggled with their race, e.g. Mandela; colonisation, e.g. Ghandi; domestic abuse, e.g. Suvari; or Islamophobia, e.g. Sabir. And as Viktor Frank did during and after the Second World War Holocaust.

True strength is also about learning not to need to submit, one of our survival strategies, so we can learn to be more in a ventral vagal present state, and in the window – rather than the toxicity of allowing our survival mechanism to take over. And let us not become unrealistic or idealistic about how difficult and tricky this is.

Present in the Dance

So, trying to be socially present, and more playful rather than fearful (Kurtz, 1990, p. 168) as our nervous system stays more in balance, is helped by trying to stay in the present moment, as we are easily deflected from this by any threat. It is so easy to submit, and even dissociate into magical thinking of some kind, as our traumatised energy remains trapped in the body tissue (van der Kolk, 2014), rather than being released into self energy. Indeed, the world itself could be in some kind of dissociative state, a very disordered state as it loses touch with mother earth.

> As long as the exile is stuck in the time and in a place where the wounding happened, it may not feel safe to share its story. Instead, the exile will

continue to experience an endless repetition of emotions of terror, rage or shame, and it will continue to perceive the world and people as dangerous, as incapable of giving it the nourishment and support it needs, and of itself as powerless. The exile needs to be retrieved from the past and brought into the present, or into a safe place. (McConnell, 2020, p. 36)

This can be helped by learning to listen to what the pains are telling us, with care, as stored in the body memory from the trauma. And our parts, perhaps sad parts hidden by anger, can gradually be heard carefully, instead of projected as it is exiled within; so exiled from us as it is so unbearable, and as our unconsciousness is in turmoil – as though the only solidity is stashing more money away, as though this might save us from the pain of living, so as to amuse ourselves.

As we all have parts, many of which are exiled, then there is a myriad of each and every human being's parts, all eight billion of us on earth today, swirling around the world and, in one way or another, impacting us through our world-wide web of interconnecting experiences. This is all part of our common humanity – or inhumanity, perhaps.

Concluding the Dance

In Nevil Shute's 1957 book about a nuclear holocaust, which is also a film, *On The Beach*, there are these lines – 'Peter, Why did all this happen to us ?' Peter replied:

> We didn't do it. No nation did, because we were all too silly. We liked our newspapers with pictures of beach girls and headlines about cases of indecent assault, and no Government was wise enough to stop us having them that way. (Shute, 1957, p. 301–2)

Over 65 years later, nothing has been done of real significance.

As Leighton writes, 'It increasingly seems like we are being drawn into a mad rush for immediate pleasure in our species' endgame' (Leighton, 2011, p. 158).

I might joke, a part of me trying to soothe the horrified exiled part of me, that if we were suddenly informed of a nuclear holocaust, I would go straight to the pub – if there was a pub available, so as to try and soothe the salience of my mortality. Hopefully, that or anything similar can be mitigated, or prevented with our conscious intelligence.

The more we submit to the few, the more we are playing their game rather than living our own lives. They might be stuck in trauma; however, how much do *we* need to be?

The last word can be left with Jane Austen: 'We have all a better guide in ourselves, if we would attend to it, than any other person can be' – *Mansfield Park* (1814).

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