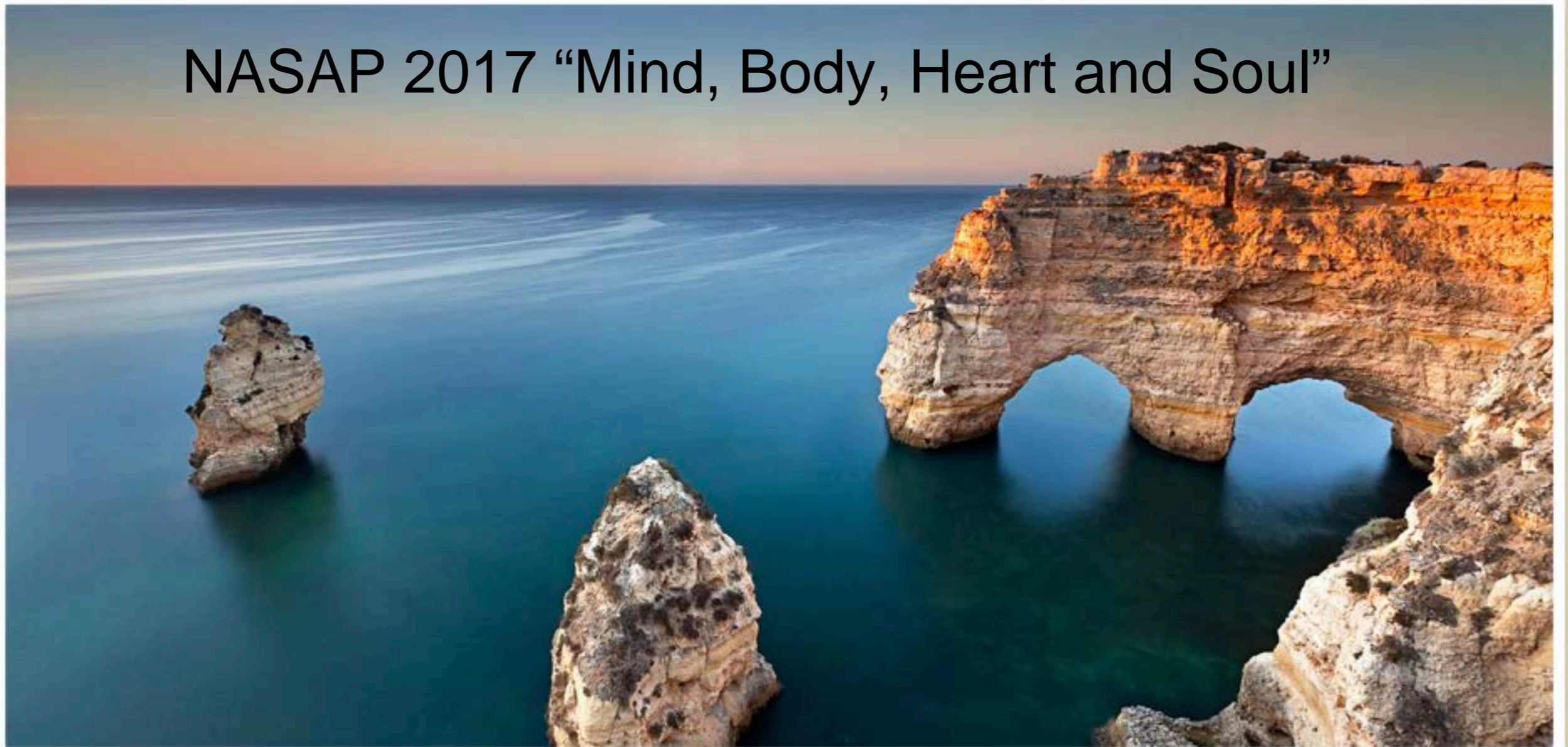


# NASAP 2017 “Mind, Body, Heart and Soul”



## OUR DEEPEST KNOWING RECONNECTING TO THE SOUL AFTER TRAUMA

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# TRAUMA LEAVES A FEELING OF DISCONNECT

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Complex and acute trauma can temporarily leave us feeling disconnected from our own inner wisdom. The belief, “I cannot be trusted,” is a common theme when uncovering trauma related symptoms. “I should have known. It must have been my fault.”

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# USING BODY, MIND, AND SPIRIT TO RECONNECT

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## Goals for our time together.....

- to understand the spiritual, mental, and physical affects of unresolved trauma and beliefs generated to self-guard against further future trauma.
- to experience an example of an integrative approach using body (Somatic Experiencing), mind (Adlerian psychology), and spirit (spiritual direction techniques).
- to explore how a belief system about self, others, and the world can become concretized in order to survive an environment or event that includes a threat to one's well-being.
- to develop curiosity as to how trusting again one's truest nature and deepest knowing is key to changing incongruent behavior.

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# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

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- A definition: that which threatens one's sense of wellbeing that happens too quickly or is prolonged over time: acute or complex. Trauma is inevitable but need not be a life sentence. *Peter Levine, Somatic Experiencing Trauma Institute*
- We often think of only physical trauma but threatening events or relationships can also happen spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically.
- An event or prolonged circumstances can lead to trauma if:
  - It happened unexpectedly.
  - You were unprepared for it.
  - You felt powerless to prevent it.
  - It happened repeatedly.
  - Someone was intentionally cruel.
  - It happened in childhood.
  - You could not escape.
- How to notice the threat/protection strategies: fight, flight, or freeze response.....

*“There is a voice that does not use words. Listen.”*

## *Rumi*

Physical symptoms of unresolved trauma and the fight, flight, or freeze.

lack of eye contact

little body movement - shut down or freeze

a lot of movement - flee, escape

incoherent talk, rambling - dissociation

little emotion or emotional overwhelm - disorientation or dissociation

shrunken posture or sitting on the edge of seat

flat affect when talking about intense experience

affect does not match the content

sleep issues - not sleeping or nightmares

lack of appetite, constipation

severe isolation

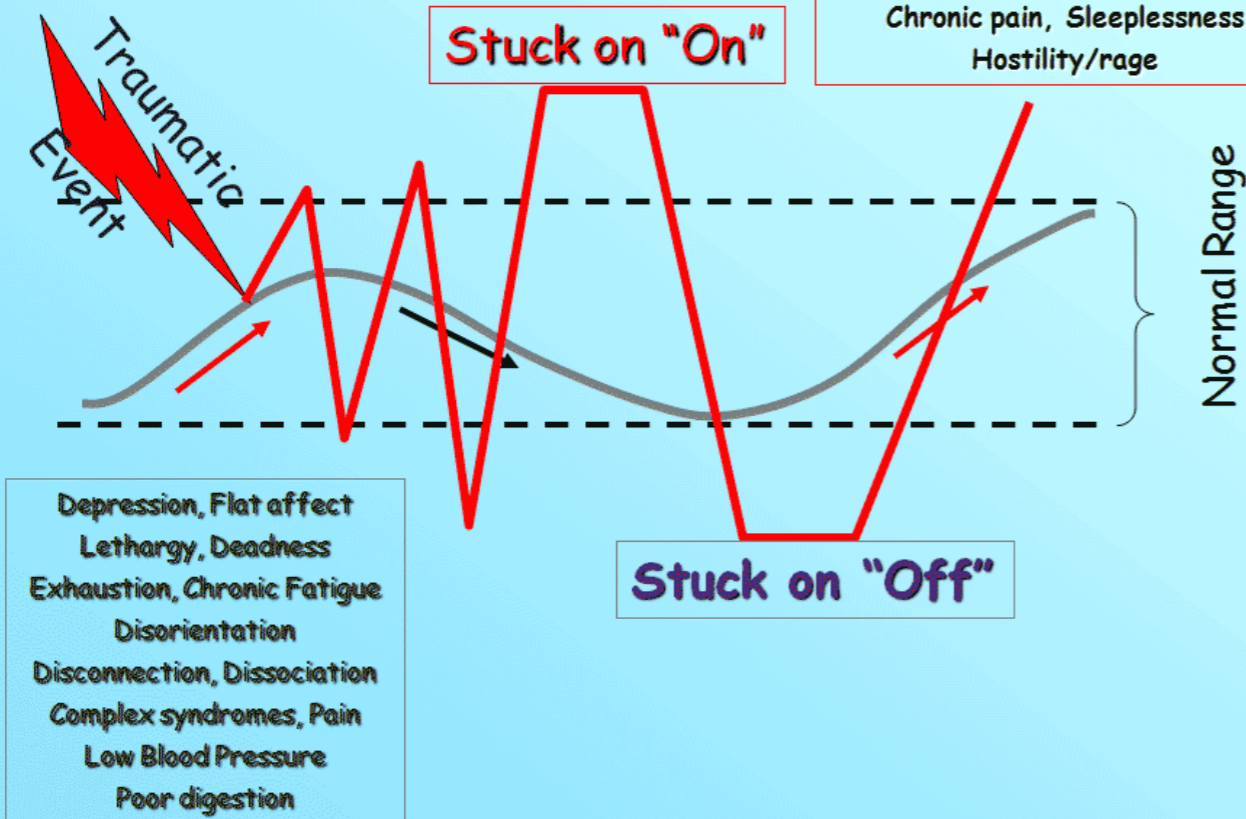
confusion or difficulty concentrating



# SOMATIC EXPERIENCING

PETER LEVINE, FOUNDATION OF HUMAN ENRICHMENT, BOULDER, CO

## Symptoms of Un-Discharged Traumatic Stress



- Trained in tracking body's natural tendency toward survival and healing.
- What is the body doing in this moment? Does the body want to do something more?
- Teaching the client to track their own sensations.
- Trauma can be discharged when the body can do now what it couldn't do then.

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# ADLERIAN INSIGHT INTO TRAUMA

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- Bettner and Lew (1996) define trauma as any experience that interrupts the system of care that gives a person a sense of control, connection, and meaning.
- Millar (2013) adds, the experience shatters one's sense of identity, worth, and belonging.
- Trauma disconnects the Self from feeling: connected, capable, a sense of counting in life, and courage.
- Our earliest experiences and trauma can concretize a set of beliefs about self, others and the world. "It must be me. I cannot be trusted. I need someone else to give me direction to keep myself safe. The world is big and I am small."

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When inward tenderness finds the secret hurt, pain itself will crack the rock and let the Soul emerge. Rumi

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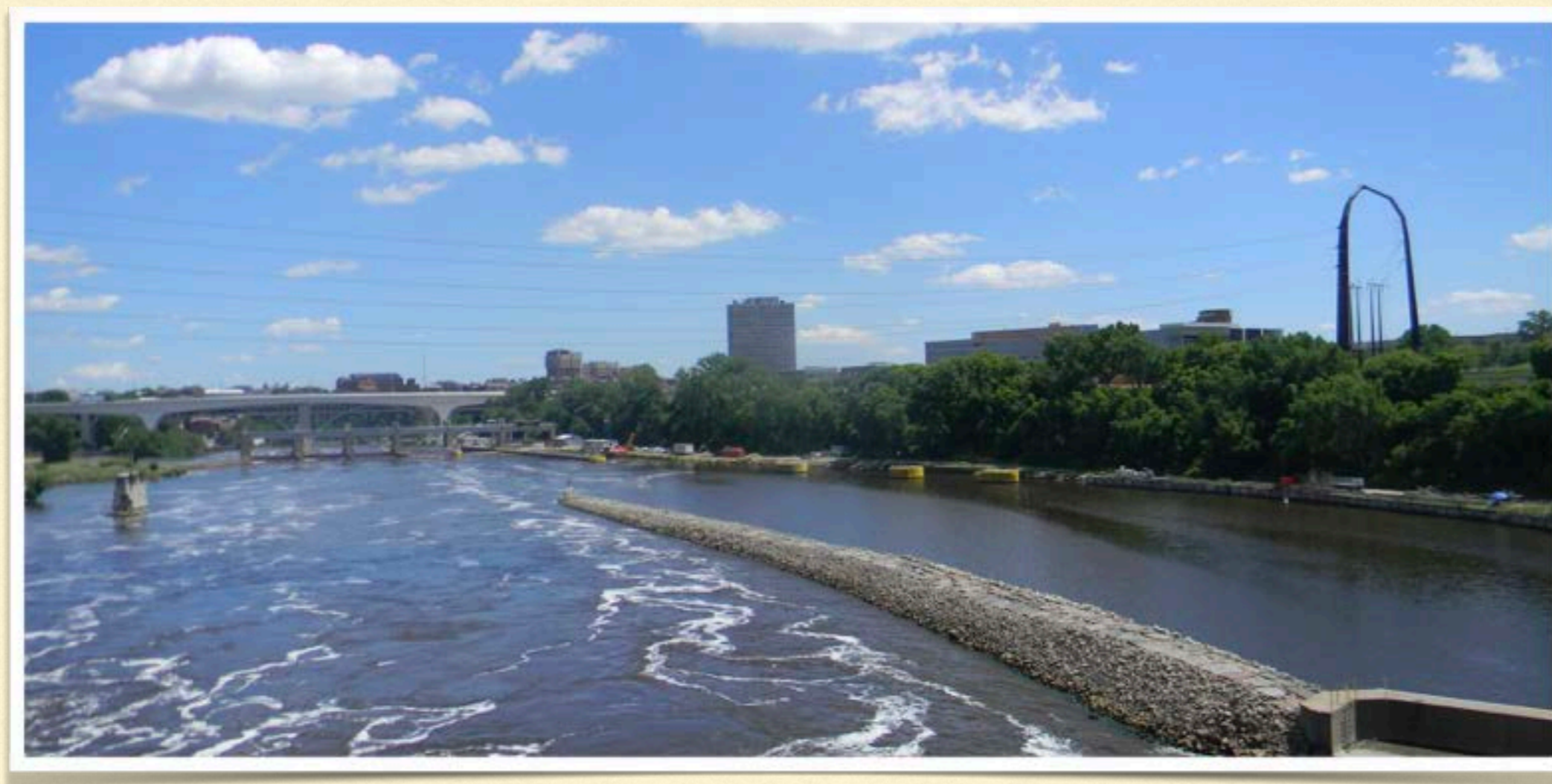
- Awareness of the client's spirituality. What do they bring?
- One's deepest knowing, longing, understanding and compassion for the Self.
- May or may not be connected to an organized belief. In fact, trauma may initiate a new sense of one's spirituality.
- Create a safe place for the client's unique sense of Soul to emerge.
- Clinicians need to know and accept their own sense of spirituality so as not to project it onto the client.



# CONNECTING TO THE SOUL



- Psyche is Greek for Soul.
- Emotions are the embodiment of the Soul and crucial aspects of the structure of personality.
- The transpersonal dimension is not somewhere else; it is inextricably part of us (Corbett, 2007). This is a sense of identity or Self which extends beyond the individual to encompass wider aspects of humankind, life, and the psyche. “There is more to me.”
- Use of emotion through intuition, art, music, nature, re-membering or building congruency: external and internal begin to match.
- Reflecting upon dreams and mining out the Soul’s messages. The use of active imagination.
- In traumatic event(s) or prolonged threat, we help the client find her inner knowing: “You knew what to do next. How did you help yourself?”



“You knew what to do.”

Yet, sometimes one’s early strategy or trauma related response (fight, flight, freeze) for survival has now gotten in the way of living life. In the present moment, we help clients....

.... honor that old strategy, grateful for one’s knowing

.... consider reviewing and altering strategies as one feels the sensation and current results of the old strategy

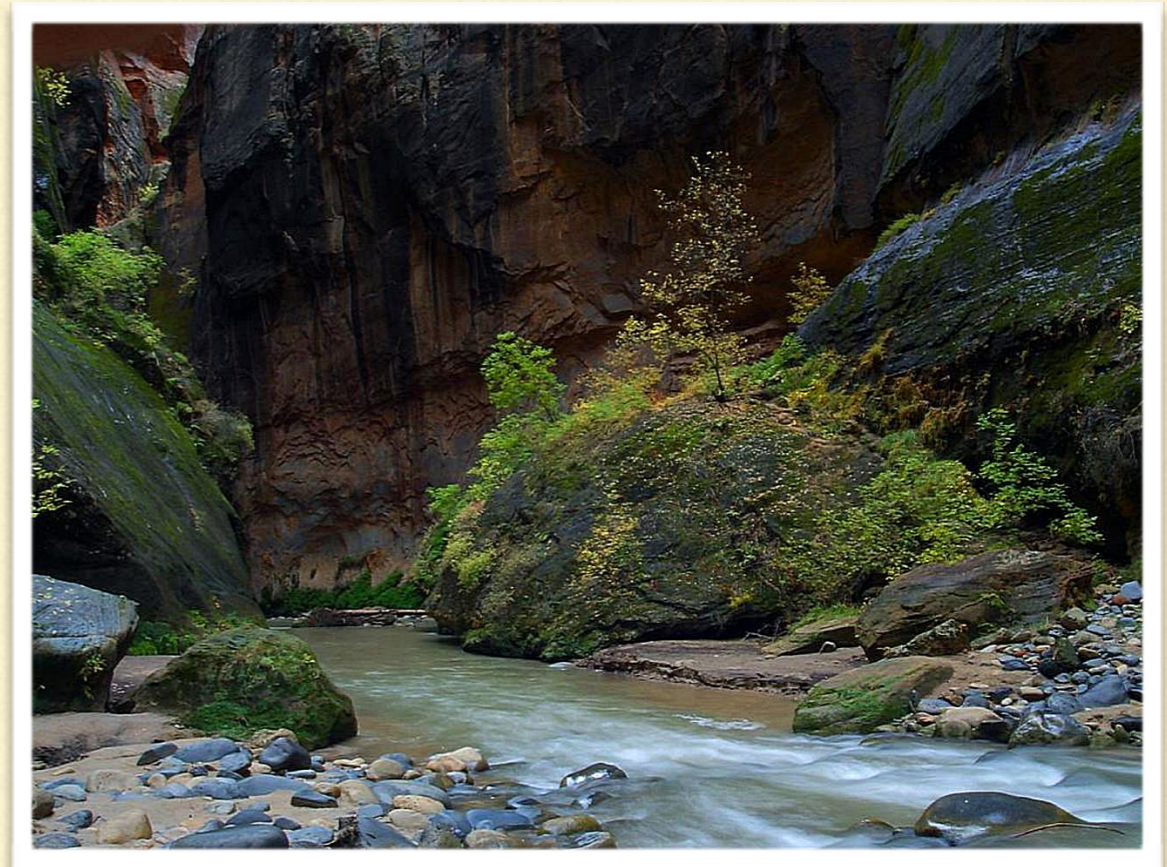
.... tap into current wisdom of self and how the client wants to live now

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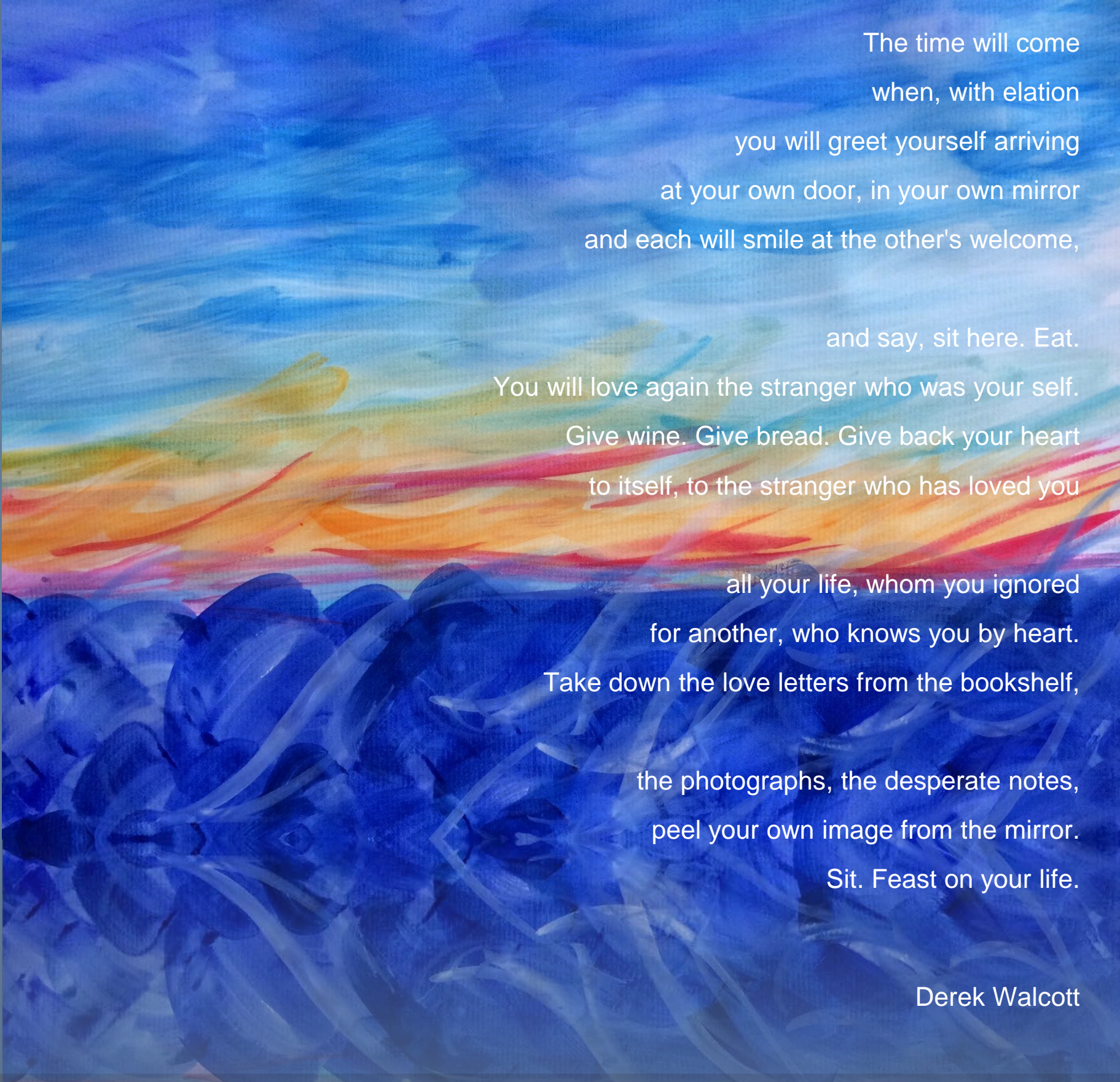
# ADLERIAN THREE PHASES OF HEALING TRAUMA (MILLAR 2013)

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- 1. Stabilization and Safety
- 2. Remembering and Processing Memories - cooperative meaning-making with client
- 3. Integrating or harmonizing with Relationships, Culture and Daily Life



Treatment takes on the once lost connection to the Self by joining with the client to give her the experience of trustworthiness and increasing the client's social interest in order to strengthen her self-agency, independence, and courage. (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).



The time will come  
when, with elation  
you will greet yourself arriving  
at your own door, in your own mirror  
and each will smile at the other's welcome,

and say, sit here. Eat.  
You will love again the stranger who was your self.

Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart  
to itself, to the stranger who has loved you

all your life, whom you ignored  
for another, who knows you by heart.

Take down the love letters from the bookshelf,

the photographs, the desperate notes,  
peel your own image from the mirror.

Sit. Feast on your life.

Derek Walcott