

**Superman, Sub-man
and the Man
Ashok Bedi, M.D.,
ISSN 1939-3407**

I am blessed to have five grandchildren ages 18 months to 16 years. Their evolving and differing perceptions of me have been most enlightening and instructive to me as a person, a psychiatrist and a psychoanalyst.

The youngest of them see me as a superman. They are awed at my capacity to make music, drumming made up songs at the kitchen tabletop, playing Frisbee with utmost dexterity, making up stories of fantastical beings, introducing them to the mysteries of biking on the Oak Leaf trail with its many wonders, stopping for an ice cream treat at the North Avenue stop on the trail, making airplanes that fly out of newspapers. They can't get over my magical powers. Whenever I am fortunate to meet up with them, I am transformed from a mundane Milwaukee psychiatrist to an enchanting superman.

To my middle grandchildren, I have lost the luster of the superman. They are

discovering iTunes, computers, friends, books, electronic toys, E-books and Nooks, and I am barely human, a Sub-man, with limited human abilities.

Then my oldest grandchild is rediscovering me as a man person. We now go to our walks together on the fashionable East side, we stop at the Brady street bookstore and browse our favorite books, we talk about his college plans and my plans to do interesting things at the Chicago Jung Institute or my next writing project. We even went to Australia together on a grandpa/grandson team and he rescued me often from across the digital divide to help me with my presentations in Queensland. We talk about my aging and his youthful plans. He reassures me that I am not that old! We appreciate each other as men.

These three modes of perceptions of my grandchildren are three faces of our mirrored reality. Some of my patients in analysis and therapy initially see me as a Superman or an idealized person. They project their inner and unrealized potentials onto me till they can reclaim them and incarnate these on their own lived life. I become the computer screen on which the inner program of their soul may project its' un-lived potential for visualization and invocation. A sort of a 3-D CAD program,

the sort the architects use to visualize their building projects on a 3-D computer screen.

In the middle stages of therapy, some patients de-idealize me. They may see me as incompetent or a man who cannot understand women, or an Indian who may not get the nuances of the American psyche etc. These Sub-man projections are an opportunity to rework their shadow, their dark and mad parts for incarnation in the analytical vessel for reworking and assimilation in their consciousness. This idealization and de-idealization is an important part of the Trinitarian aspect of human perception. We create new perceptions under the auspices of the Creator God Brahma and his consort Saraswati. This initial creation is glowing and Super. Then Shiva, the Destroyer gets into the field and with the help of his consort Shakti, destroys this cozy creation and dissolves it in the relationship vessel. This leads to the perception of the other, whether a spouse, parent or other as barely human.

In the later stages of analysis, therapy and all human relationship, a mature perception of the other constellates. Under the auspices of the consolidating field of the Preserver God Vishnu and his consort Laxmi, the Goddess of peace, prosperity and plenty; a more mature and tempered

perception of the self, other, the world and the future crystallizes. The self and the other are honored in their reality and authenticity. These perceptions are not filtered through the veil of Maya or personal distortions. Things, peoples and events are seen, just as they are.

A mature individual does not buy into a Superman, Subman projections. He holds his sense of self, as a solid baseline with authenticity and integrity with changing winds of projections. I am grateful and blessed that my grandchildren are my greatest teachers in understanding myself, others and the world with its elusive, kaleidoscopic matrix.

Ashok Bedi, M.D.

1220 Dewey Avenue,

Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Phone (414) 454-6610

Dr Bedi is a Diplomate Jungian psychoanalyst and a board certified psychiatrist. He is a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists of Great Britain, a diplomate in Psychological Medicine at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of England, a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. He is a Clinical Professor in Psychiatry at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee and the

President of the Carl G. Jung Institute of Chicago. He is a Consulting Psychiatrist at the Aurora Psychiatric Hospital and the Aurora Health Care Network. He has been a psychiatric consultant to several agencies in Metro Milwaukee. Presently he is the consultant for the Sexual Assault treatment center at the Aurora Sinai Samaritan Hospital, Dewey Center at the Aurora Psychiatric Hospital for treatment of Addictions and the Pastoral Counseling Service of Greater Milwaukee.



Trained in India, Great Britain and the US, he is interested in the emerging frontiers of Spirituality and Healing and the synapses of the Mind, Body, Soul and Spirit. He is author of the book, Path to the Soul, Weiser Books, 2000, Awaken the Slumbering Goddess: The Latent Code of the Hindu Goddess Archetypes, Booksurge Publishers, 2007 and the coauthor of Retire Your Family Karma, Nicholas-Hays, Inc. 2003, These and his other upcoming presentations can be previewed at his website

www.pathtothesoul.com

Ashok Bedi has been in practice in Milwaukee for over thirty years and specializes in Adult Psychotherapy and Jungian Psychoanalysis. He regularly presents lectures and seminars in India, Great Britain, Ireland and USA on the topic of the Spiritual and analytic dimensions of treatment, healing and personal growth. Over the last several years, he has been the International Association of Analytical Psychologists liaison person for developing Jungian training programs in India and travels annually to India to teach, train the consult with the Jungian Developing groups at several centers in India including Ahmedabad &, Bangalore. He leads the annual "In the Footsteps of Carl Jung in India" study group to several centers in India under the auspices of the New York Jung Foundation.

www.pathtothesoul.com