



The Threshing Floor

April 2015

Newsletter of the Guild for Psychological Studies

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Guild Vision: The Guild envisions a world in which the significance of each person's truth, authority, and inspired purpose finds fulfillment in life and community.

Guild Mission: Guild seminars offer a way of psychological and spiritual transformation that inspires individuals to live their purpose, expand consciousness, and discover and create meaning in their lives and community.

Notes about the Napkin Rings at Four Springs

By: Nan Gallagher and Sue Renfrew

When Sue Renfrew and I thought of painting symbols on wooden napkin rings and using cloth napkins, we thought it would save Four Springs a little money and a few trees in the future. We had no idea that the rings would take on a life of their own, and enter into the ambiance of the seminars. It was usually exciting to see just what mystery had in mind when you drew a symbol!

After awhile we thought we should add a few extra rings, and we chose some negative aspects for about ten rings. Over the months, these began to mysteriously "disappear"! However, the original group remained intact. Some of the "disappeared" were found in the meadow. Ah, the shadow knows!

It may be that some members will want to create new rings. Wooden rings can still be bought in some good hardware stores, or can be purchased from Amazon. If so, the size ring should have about a 1 1/2 inch or 1 1/4 inch open center in order for a cloth napkin to fit through it. The best paint to use would be acrylic paint, as it is permanent, and easily used with small brushes.

We made the napkins from printed cotton fabric and sewed the edges by sewing machine. The best size would be a 15 inch or 18 inch square, and the fabric should be washed before being sewn.

This entire project could be very meditative!
All good wishes,

Napkin Ring Symbols:

SIGNS ON THE NAPKIN RINGS:

- The soul's pilgrimage through life
- Morning; the rising sun (pointing to center)
- The male element; striving for truth; by nature celestial (Apex appearing to point away from center)
- Evening; the setting sun (pointing toward outside)
- The female element; firmly based upon terrestrial matters, yet yearns for higher things! (Apex pointing to center)
- God and Earth combined in harmony; Earliest of all signs, found everywhere.
- Active Intellect
- The meeting of the celestial and terrestrial
- The waxing and waning moon, through which flows the course of life
- Autumn
- Active, male element; what comes from on high; the effective element in time (line divides into left and right) vertically
- Passive female element; what has been there from the beginning of all things; (sign is below center; line is horizontal) also water
- The Godhead
- Opposition; 180 degrees
- Solomon's seal; very primitive - the witness' feet; John's cross; the five senses; the five Mosaic books; the Druid Godhead

Source: The Book of Signs by Rudolf Koch, Dover Books

Fire (active, masc.)
 Air (passive, fem.)

SIGNS ON THE NAPKIN RINGS:

- Spring
- The earth - solar, dominated by the elements (the cross faces the center)
- Friendship between men and between women - apart from family life
- The emblem of the world, and of nature; in it the number four is symbolized - the four elements; the four corners of the Heavens; the four Evangelists
- The expectant soul - human gazing aloft with outstretched arms; a rising path with fork roads to Good and Evil.
- Winter
- Orderliness
- Intellect in action
- The oneness of God; the God-head; power descending from above.
- The Orb of the World; the center is Jerusalem; the upper half is Asia; the vertical line is the Mediterranean Sea; Africa on the right; Europe on the left.
- Sign of unity - three arrows bound together
- Summer
- Earth; dry, cold; solid, melancholic
- The universe; the center is an orb of earth and water, surrounded by the inner ring of the aerial ocean, and outer ring of the empyrean.
- Trinity of body, mind and soul - now fully manifested; the immortal essence, the soul, is the point (a diamond) in the center.

Source: The Book of Signs by Rudolf Koch, Dover Books
Additional Meanings may be found in this book.

Water (active, masc.)
 Earth (passive, fem.)

found by Nan Gallagher

A Question for the Board

By: John Petroni

A pressing question to the Board of Directors of the Guild (and to anyone eager to enter into the fray.)

Q. What has happened to the study of the Records of the Life of Jesus?

This text was once the focus of the work of the Guild to which a number of people enthusiastically dedicated time and labor.

Currently references to the Records are short and infrequent. The energy of the “Guild” seems more directed to what is called Psychology as the Discipline of Interiority.

Q. Is it to be understood that the Records work is no longer the focus of the “Guild”?

Q. Is the Records work now seen as irrelevant?

Q. Has the focus on Psychology as the Discipline of Interiority displaced the Records work?

Q. Has a discontinuity occurred with the past focus?

There is a need to clarify the focus of the “Guild’s” work, a need to state clearly the current nature of this work. People I speak to about this have only vague responses. Such a lack of clarity dissipates interest and energy.

A Response from the Board

By: The Board of Directors

John Petroni asks questions regarding the current role of the *Records of the Life of Jesus* in the work of the Guild, and raises the question of the place of Psychology as the Discipline of Interiority in the Guild’s work. The Board takes these questions to heart, and into ongoing consideration and discussion. Here, we clarify the role of the Board with regard to study programs and content. We welcome others to consider John’s questions and join the conversation.

The Board has for a number of years now been shepherding a transformation of the organizational process that supports the creative initiative of Guild leaders. It is a process that attempts to respond to changes in Guild leadership as well as to changes in the social environments of the world today. Our structure invites leaders (and those who would like to work with leaders) to propose projects for study, for seminar development, and for seminar offerings. Guidelines for proposals uphold the vision and mission of the Guild, which are aligned with the organization’s Articles of Incorporation. These refer to bringing a breadth of content material to a psychological study which

includes our “religious spirit” and which aids the achievement of meaning and purpose in our lives and communities.

While adhering to the guidelines and to the “modified Socratic” method of engaging material, particular content is determined by the interests of those who propose projects and those who participate in those studies. The seminars and other study activities announced in the Threshing Floor and on the website reflect those interests. As a membership organization we believe John’s questions belong to the Guild community of members and others who read the Threshing Floor. The Board continuously evaluates the state of the Guild and reflects on its potential. We welcome your thoughts.

Hic Rhodus, hic salta

By: Hal Childs

John Petroni has published what to him are “pressing” questions, and directed them to the Board of Directors. He claims there is a need to state clearly the nature of the Guild’s work. He further claims that the “lack of clarity dissipates interest and energy.” The Guild is a membership organization, and its seminar leaders have always been the ones who guide the direction of the work. The Guild Board has created a structure and process that facilitate the creative work of its leaders. The structure and process are flexible and the Board continues to invite Guild leaders and other interested persons to take the initiative to propose seminars and events that express their deepest passions and interests. The Guild Board does not “own” the philosophical direction of the Guild’s work.

John Petroni has been a central leader of the Records for over forty years, and he was really the first leader to introduce Psychology as the Discipline of Interiority to the Guild’s Records seminars and its leadership training. John’s questions are obviously pressing at him, some lack of clarity is obviously pressing at him, or is John immune from the penetrating nature of his own questions? If these are truly pressing questions then I am most eager to hear John’s responses to his own questions. If these are truly pressing questions then the person who has been at the center of the work that has given rise to these questions is most responsible for providing his own answers. All questions imply an implicit answer that wants to become explicit. What is the answer that is implicitly active within John that has given rise to its own questions, and seeks consciousness as John’s response?

Hic Rhodus, hic salta, means, colloquially, to take one’s stand here and now, to no longer put off or deflect showing one’s stuff! I am truly interested in John’s

opinion, and I cannot respond to his opinion, his stance, if he does not articulate it.

(This is Hal's personal response and is not a statement as a member of the Board.)

Spend the Day with Matisse, Bonnard and Vuillard

See their work, listen to their words, delight in their color, and find how their art can enliven your life. There will be time to explore how they do what they do and even try it. With the exciting exhibition from the Scottish Museum at the de Young until May 31st and a significant Bonnard show coming next year, we have a chance to see examples of their best work, and so be sure to go on your own before the seminar.

Lunch is included

Time: Saturday May 16, 2015 at 9:30 – 4:30

Place: Sue Renfrew's house in San Francisco

Cost: \$50.00, which includes \$15.00 non-refundable registration fee.

Report from the SF Bay Area, USA

By: Jack Arlen Russell Stone

In the special March issue of the TF, Janet Boeth Jones told about the writings of the Guild founders and their colleagues. Though she did not use the word *soul*, she captured the meaning of an article I had written for that issue audaciously titled, "Does the Guild have a Soul?" In it, I went on to discuss how those writings contain for me what might be considered the *soul of the Guild*. I simply meant to point out that the past is not lost, but it lives on in the writings that are still available for those who may have experienced first-hand those writers at seminars in years gone by.

As a person lucky enough to live in the Bay Area where the Guild has thrived for nearly six decades, I have gone on to discover other sources of inspiration by writers in the sciences, metaphysics, psychology and philosophy, as well as religions other than Christian that are thriving along with the Guild. But, I feel I probably would not have discovered these sources had it not been for the work begun by Elizabeth so long ago that changed my life and led me to Jung; for me, the primary fountain of Mind.

These wondrous words are being—have simultaneously been—written in NYC, the U.K., L.A., Italy, Sydney, New Delhi, Budapest, as well as Berlin. An example is our own Jacob Needleman, professor of philosophy at SF State, who wrote 50 years ago (!):

Western science has operated for centuries on the assumption that we can understand the universe without understanding ourselves. We are just now seeking to make the necessary connection between the general laws of nature and those of our (inner) nature. But the job won't be done with "massive injections of the new consciousness"; we cannot democratize the sacred by cheapening its demands.

Another Bay Area writer I have followed, the late Theodore Roszak of East Bay State, commented, "With this one statement, Needleman has forced the discussion of both science and religion in our time into a new, more mature and discriminating phase." How far afield do we have to go for wisdom to understand ourselves and the world we live in, when we have had the psychology of Jung presented to us, melded with science, by our own Guild leader, John Hitchcock? (Also available from Guild books).

More Fire for Life

By: Judith Peterson

ONE THING IS NEEDED

We will continue working with this theme in more of the central teachings of Jesus, exploring how each teaching frames in different images "the one thing needed." With insights from Jungian depth psychology and nonverbal work with art and body awareness, we will experience our own deep knowing of "the one thing needed" and why it is so important.

April 21- May 26, 2015, for six Tuesday nights, 7:00PM to 9:00PM

At the Petersons' home
418 California Street,
Campbell, CA

April Birthdays

Barbara Black	Apr 12
Barbara Jeskalian	Apr 12
Carla Gerber	Apr 14
Kay Young	Apr 16
William Dols	Apr 17
Gillian Sands	Apr 18
Mac McCaslin	Apr 19
Marcia Burkart	Apr 20
Bill Thomas	Apr 20
Elisabeth Hathaway	Apr 23
Judith Richardson	Apr 29
Mary Freedlund	Apr 30

Response to an Invitation for Reflection and Response

By: Ann Keiffer

On January 25th, I woke in the night with screaming tinnitus and found I had gone completely deaf in my right ear. I would come to learn this rare and idiopathic phenomenon is Sudden Sensorineural Hearing Loss. After SSNHL strikes there is a chance some hearing may return, but treatment options are limited and often have little or no effect. This far past onset, recovery becomes less and less likely for me.

At first, SSNHL sent me into full problem-solving mode. But what if the problem can't be solved? This poem is about my dialogue with SSNHL, but it could be about anything in life I don't want... but, nevertheless, have.

The Thing You Didn't Want
When The Thing You Didn't Want
comes pounding on your door
and you think to pretend you are
not home, you will not be spared.

The Thing You Didn't Want will
walk through your locked door like
wood is air. Your protections and
protestations will have no meaning.

And you will stand trembling before
The Thing You Didn't Want and say
you can't have it, it has come to the
wrong house, there must be a mistake.

But The Thing You Didn't Want will
be immovable, inevitable, looming, cold.
There is only one thing you can do then:
Invite it in, The Thing You Didn't Want.

Lay the table where the sun can spare
some light and warmth for you. Bring
cups of coffee, tea, cookies, cake,
anything your fumbling hands can offer.

Now sit down at your own table
with your own cups and plates,
your pen and paper...and talk to
The Thing You Didn't Want.

Though your eyes run, red, and
your teeth break and crumble
on your rage or anguish—you must
ask The Thing You Didn't Want

what it wants, what you need to
know, what you'll have to do to
work with it. Write down your
every question, its every answer.

You may think you won't know
what questions to ask or how
The Thing You Didn't Want will
answer. But you will. You will

imagine it, make it up, write it down.
The words will come from a deeper
place than you knew you could reach.
And there at your table, in the light,

The Thing You Didn't Want may
begin to reveal it is a Shape-Shifter.
You may sense subtleties in its form
and being, a new malleability in you.

You cannot force The Thing You
Didn't Want to leave the house of
your once seemingly inviolate self.
You will only terrify and exhaust

yourself with struggle. Expand. As
you can. Learning to live into this.
Give The Thing You Didn't Want
your "yes." Make something of it.

Make it your way-shower, guru,
sensei, teacher. In some strange,
unthought-for way, it will, in turn,
make something more of you.

Further Invitation for Reflection

By: Jennie Larson

Ann asks, what if the problem can't be solved? When confronted with a problem that can't be solved, I might experience, for example, anything from mild anxiety to paralyzing terror, depending on the nature of the problem, and the degree to which I allow it to penetrate, which can keep me from truly engaging with What Is.

What problem-that-can't-be-solved demands *your* attention now? What happens if you explore your emotional responses while also bringing a curiosity about the thing in itself (not necessarily only its impact on you)?

You are invited to reflect on this question, and to submit a response to the TF. Please keep it under 400 words (visual images are also welcome) and email it to office@guildsf.org.

Response to March issue

By: Judith Peterson

I enjoyed the last issue very much and read it several times. It was good to know what was still going on in various communities. I personally want to recommend the Denver pilgrimages for people from other states. I joined the trips to Chartres and Turkey-Greece and was deeply grateful: wonderful travel arrangements and experiences coupled with meaningful Guild work. A very fine pilgrimage experience.

Guild for Psychological Studies
July 11-19, 2015



The Inevitable Gravity of Beautiful Trouble

Is it dangerous and foolhardy to offer a seminar on trouble? Should we beware of what will be stirred up? Who wakes up in the morning assuming trouble is something to look forward to?

We buy insurance; we make plans for disasters; we anticipate worst case scenarios; we learn to put on character armor as children to cope with troubling parents; we become vigilant for psychological trouble. The natural attitude is to keep trouble away.

Still, we must ask, What is the unknown presence that troubles us? What does trouble want? What does trouble need from us?

For Jesus the kingdom of God is trouble. For Jung the individuation impulse is trouble. Yet both these paths are a way to authenticity, to consciousness, to deep beauty.

Let him who seeks, not cease seeking until he finds, and when he finds, he will be troubled, and when he has been troubled, he will marvel and he will reign over the All.

Gospel of Thomas, logia 2

The shadow troubles our self-image, and the trickster troubles our best-laid plans. It is said the truth will set you free, but first it will trouble you profoundly. We sleep and our sleep is troubled by dreams. We have a choice: either to be victims of trouble, or to face the challenge of trouble. How might trouble lead us to Beauty and open us to truth?

In this seminar we will seek to face the inevitable gravity of *trouble*, to learn its inner necessity and to know its hidden secrets for making what is beautiful of soul manifest. The wisdom of Jesus, the Greek myth of Odysseus, the soul-centered psychology of Wolfgang Giegerich, and most especially our personal experience will guide our exploration.

The seminar process uses a modified Socratic method to guide group discussion. We honor the dignity of each individual to express their truth and move at their own pace. We utilize meditation, expressive arts, music, body movement and awareness, and silence to deepen our work.

Please include a letter stating why you wish to attend and any pertinent information about prior study and experience around spiritual issues.

Location: Four Springs, Middletown CA
Leaders: Hal Childs, PhD, MFT and Patricia Calcagno Stenger, MA, MFT
Fee: \$1,485. Include a non-refundable fee of \$50 with registration.
Limited scholarships and payment plans are available.
Contact for more information:
Hal Childs, 415-573-2469; halchilds@earthlink.net
Register at www.guildsf.org/seminar-registration

This seminar meets the qualifications for 30 hours of continuing education credit for MFT's, LPCCs, LEPS, and / or LCSWs as required by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. Approved provider #PCE 1829. Please include an additional \$15 for the CEU certificate.

Participants will:

- Learn aspects of Jungian work on the psychological implications of life's troubles.
- Explore the importance of accessing the unconscious in order to process the buried, complex feelings related to the inevitable suffering of daily life.
- Explore and practice psychological thinking.
- Use art expression, body awareness and imagination as ways to dialogue with energies present in the self and in the world.

Stay Connected

Bob Ridder, Administrative Coordinator, is available for all inquiries by phone at (415) 561-2385, or by email at office@guildsf.org.

Send your email address to office@guildsf.org so that we can keep you connected and up-to-date on Guild events. Also be sure that we have your current mailing address so that we are able to send you this yearly edition of the newsletter. Please keep us updated with your address changes.

Mailing Address

Guild for Psychological Studies
P.O. Box 29385
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Guild Website

Visit www.guildsf.org for information about seminars and events, and to register for seminars. The website also has general information about the Guild, past issues of the Threshing Floor, relevant news, and links to resources. If you would like to post information of interest to the Guild community, please email harryhenderson51@gmail.com, our web administrator.

Guild Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/guildsf>, launched in January! If you haven't yet, please "friend" and "like" us!

Newsletter

To receive 12 issues of *The Threshing Floor* a year, please contact the Guild office. There is no charge for an e-mail subscription. For a print subscription, please send a check for \$25 to the Guild office.

Items for inclusion in the Threshing Floor should be mailed to the Guild Office, Attn. Threshing Floor Editor, or emailed to office@guildsf.org. The deadline for each issue is the 20th of the month. Items received after that date will be published the following month.

Production & Layout Editor: Wilene Chang
Content Editors: Janet Boeth Jones & Sue
Renfrew Distribution: Bob Ridder

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter (by contributors other than staff and directors) are the writers' and not necessarily an official position of the Guild.

Publishing House sales – books and CDs

Order publications on the Guild website, or contact Carina Ravelly at guildpublishing@yahoo.com.

Donations

Many thanks to our donors! Your financial support in any amount helps the Guild with seminars and other events, with the training of leaders, with outreach, and with other new and ongoing efforts. Because the Guild is a registered nonprofit organization, with 501(c)(3) status, your contribution may be tax deductible. Donations should be directed to the Guild office address, or you may donate online using the PayPal link you'll find by selecting the Make a Donation link on the main page of our website.

Volunteers

There are several people who fill necessary volunteer roles in the Guild. If you would like to be a Guild volunteer, please contact the Guild office at office@guildsf.org and let us know particular volunteer roles that appeal to you. Currently volunteers are members of the editorial staff for the Threshing Floor; members of the Board of Directors; serve as continuing education coordinator; train to serve as seminar coordinator, committee person or cook; provide transportation to/from seminars for attendees; help to catalog or research Guild archive materials; write reviews for Guild books and other publications; etc.

Friends and Members

Friends of the Guild are donors and others interested in receiving Guild information who are not Voting Members. Voting membership requires active participation in some form of leadership or committee role, or other volunteer effort, and the payment of annual dues. Voting members may receive a print subscription to the Threshing Floor upon request.

Board of Directors

Elizabeth Bremer, Secretary
Hal Childs, President
Harry Henderson, Treasurer
Jennifer Larson, President
Rita McGowan

