

The Healer's Bent: Solitude and Dialogue in the Clinical Encounter (Relational Perspectives Book Series) (v. 28)

By James McLaughlin



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Over the course of a 50-year career, James T. McLaughlin has sought to open the playing field of psychoanalytic exploration by treating unconscious processes as the very material from which we fashion meaningful lives. His unique, iconoclastic perspective, which challenged the conventions of his time and professional milieu, not only engages the creative tension between the stance of the analyst and the stance of the healer, but also contains striking intimations of contemporary relational and interpersonal models of psychoanalytic treatment. *The Healer's Bent*, which thematically integrates published and unpublished papers and contains three chapters of heretofore unpublished autobiographical reflection, bridges analytic practice and other psychotherapeutic modalities. It will make McLaughlin's distinct approach to clinical theory and practice widely available to a broad and receptive readership.

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Editorial Review

Review

"James McLaughlin has the rare gift of being able to write with unusual grace and unaffected vulnerability about the truly human elements in the therapeutic encounter. This brilliant compilation of rich, penetrating, and highly personal papers welcomes fellow travelers into the heart and mind of a profoundly humane psychoanalyst and leaves them feeling less alone in their own elusive pursuits. The Healer's Bent is a powerfully illuminating and deeply touching chef-d'oeuvre that will surely become a classic in the field."

- Martha Stark, M.D., Harvard Medical School

"This memoir of the journey of a modern Diogenes seeking psychotherapeutic understanding is a scientific tale driven by the desire to heal, shaped by relentless psychological curiosity, and expressed in the poetic words of an Irish bard. With ruthless personal honesty, McLaughlin shows us psychoanalysis as a form of liberating inquiry into both body and soul. Here passion and precision are one. The reader not only learns but also shares in the experience of curiosity put into action. The result is a pleasure and a gift."

- Warren S. Poland, M.D., Author, Melting the Darkness

"Dr. James McLaughlin's collected papers offer a rare perspective on the growth and transformation of a dedicated therapist. His deep compassion, combined with his keen intellect, served him well in his journey to know both himself and his patients. This volume offers the reader a rare glimpse into the heart and mind of one of America's most brilliant analytic thinkers."

- Karen Maroda, Ph.D., Author, Seduction, Surrender, and Transformation (Analytic Press, 1999)

"For thirty years James McLaughlin has been writing a series of thought-provoking, often challenging papers that, in addition to being highly stimulating, are works of prose poetry; papers that, written in Jim's distinctive, Irish-tinged voice and peppered with flights of imaginative imagery, mark him as the most original, free-spirited, and leprechaunish of our authors. In his detailed descriptions of analytic hours, Jim brings to life, as few can, the essence of the analytic situation."

- Theodore J. Jacobs, M.D., in JAPA, 54.4, 2006

"[Mclaughlin's] journey and evolving point of view are etched clearly on the pages. The reader has the sense of being in the presence of a very thoughtful, sincere person who has earnestly tried to do his very best. Although I myself did not know him personally, I feel confident that he would strike anyone who met him as a genuinely fine person."

- Harriet Basseches, Ph.D., Psychologist-Psychoanalyst, Winter 2008

"Throughout his writings, one has a sense of the deeply personal involvement he has with his patients and the focus of his clinical concern on the relationship and interaction evolving between analyst and patient as the analytic process works itself out. the present volume makes these connections much more apparent and explicit, so that readers will have a unique opportunity to study how these processes came to intersect in the development and clinical thinking of at least one gifted and thoughtful analytic clinician."

- W.W. Meissner, S.J., M.D., in Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic, Vol. 71, No. 3 (Summer 2007)

About the Author

James T. McLaughlin, M.D. received psychiatric training at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and attended the Philadelphia Psychoanalytic Institute from 1945 to 1952. Subsequent to his graduation from the latter, he returned to Pittsburgh, where he established his private practice and helped create the intramural analytic institute at the University of Pittsburgh. Some 30 publications in major analytic journals and service on their editorial boards attest to his abiding interest in the evolution of psychoanalytic theory and technique. McLaughlin's writings have centered on psychosomatic medicine, nonverbal communication, and the intertwined psychologies of patient and therapist.

Trained in transactional analysis, body-centered psychotherapy, and psychoanalysis, William F. Cornell, M.A. is author of 30 journal articles and book chapters, many of which explore the interfaces among interpersonal, body-centered, and psychoanalytic modalities. He is coeditor of the Transactional Analysis Journal and of *From Transactions to Relations: The Emergence of Relational Paradigms in Transactional Analysis*.

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Jaime Worm:

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