

## Murray's Story

I was born in 1931.  
 I was walking along in the Pentlands when I was 9.  
 There was a bang and I turned and there was a boy in bits,  
 literally.  
 I discovered later that he had picked up a mortar bomb.  
 And it began to really bite into me  
 3 months later I was a school refuser,  
 quite seriously.

I was quite, you'd say, disturbed  
 with nightmares and delusions, I now realize.  
 And everybody said, "what on earth is wrong with this kid?  
 Nobody knew.  
 The ironic thing is that the man who really knew about mental stress –  
 Dr Ronald Fairbairn, psychoanalyst in the west end of Edinburgh –  
 he was there practising.  
 But I wasn't referred to him.  
 It was rather sad that I couldn't just say  
 "I need to go to Fairbairn" –  
 you don't have that kind of sense when you're that age.

When I was 13,  
 I had a religious conversion  
 and I was received into the church,  
 became a member of a very lively youth club,  
 Leaders were coming back from the front.  
 Good people.  
 Men who had been through pretty horrible things themselves  
 and who had a pretty good idea of what us kids needed.

During university  
 There was short-term counselling and psychotherapy available of varying quality.  
 And I got some help.  
 At the same time, I was getting challenged  
 by having to read "The Future of an Illusion", Freud's big work on religion.

I became a minister  
 My wife and I started in Perth.  
 Then we went to Glasgow.  
 I had a lot of fun,  
 learned a lot,  
 preached too much.  
 Found myself more and more reading psychology,  
 and thinking, "what a terrible heathen I am,  
 I should be reading St John's Gospel etc, etc."  
 So there was all this fight in me about that.  
 The most dangerous youth club I ever ran was in Glasgow  
 The boys said to me one day,  
 "you'd better talk to Jimmy, he's aff his heid."  
 So I thought, well, what's that?  
 And I leaned against the wall -  
 You never spoke straight at people,  
 you leaned against the wall -  
 and said, "how are you doing then?"  
 Jimmy replied, "my faither came doon the stair the other morning and said, your  
                   mother's deid, dinnae greet." (don't cry).  
 And suddenly I was turning on sufficiently to know, this is a very disturbed boy.  
 What do you do with that?  
 How do you respond to that?  
 And he was acting it out in very strange and violent ways.  
 Behind that violent behaviour,  
 something violent had happened to him  
 which could not be spoken of or thought about.

These pointers kept appearing in my life as a minister.  
 I thought, I've gotta do something about this,  
 I've gotta get hold of some basic facts of what it is that enables boys and girls to grow  
                   up into good men and women  
 because we don't know.  
 And then I knew that I'd made a mistake.  
 What was needed was not more religion  
 but more psychologically informed faith.

So after 5 years, I started packing my bags  
 and my father, bless his heart, said,  
 "I've seen an interesting job,  
 a part-time lecturer in developmental psychology  
 and chaplain to the Royal Edinburgh Hospital"  
 That was a marvelous door he opened.



All the time I was seeing this analyst, Dr David Campbell.  
 Around the same time, he told me,  
 "there is this man coming up from the south, Jock Sutherland."  
 So I went to see him.  
 The door really swung open at that point.  
 Jock Sutherland was an extraordinary chap.  
 He was a training analyst.  
 He took me on as a kind of apprentice,  
 and I learned more in the process of osmosis and identification with him  
 than I did from the 4 year course I'd enrolled on of formal training.  
 By this time there were 8 of us  
 and that became the Scottish Institute of Human Relations.

Although my job that I was paid for was chaplain and lecturer,  
 I'd say, "let's also talk with the priests and the ministers about the problems that their  
 parishioners are going through".  
 They were your ordinary parishioners  
 who instead of going to the Infirmary with a broken leg,  
 were coming to the Royal Edinburgh because they were deeply depressed or whatever  
 it was.  
 And their ministers were saying, "I really want to understand a bit more about what's  
 happening to them".

Came the time when I wanted to leave the Royal Edinburgh  
 I was there 17 years.  
 I became freelance,  
 but still kept on working with analytic groups for 20 more years.

I got to a point where religion was like a tired old horse that was dying under me,  
 at least the forms of religion that I knew and still know about.  
 I suppose it's the way in which banality has invaded the church.  
 Being a minister and being involved in people's tragedies and family lives and so on,  
 you realise that what you're really viewing are some of the great tragedies of the world.  
 I don't just mean the sad ones  
 but the large things that Sophocles and Shakespeare wrote about.  
 And what I think distresses all of us  
 is the sort of miniaturization of the church,  
 the tiny grasp of reality that we sometimes have in the church  
 in our tiny little services and so on.  
 I feel like the church is an elderly relative for whom I have great affection and respect  
 but I no longer share that person's existence and plan.

To think of the people who are struggling away,  
human beings like me, like you.  
Instead of coming up with some smart aleck answer  
or tidy explanation,  
just to really try to get to what it must be like to be this person.  
That to my mind is the first and foremost question.  
And I suppose psychotherapy and the life of a psychotherapist seemed to offer more  
opportunity to express that  
and to explore that  
than the Church did.

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