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## Memory & Beyond

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SIMON WEIN, M.D.

Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Victoria, Australia

Fear is born of knowledge.

A child will as innocently play with a snake as a teddy bear. A young adult as naively dabble with love as life itself.

Bearing a child is as close as we get to original Creation—something from nothing. Creating a child creates an irredeemable future and changes forever the fabric of life. Procreation can thereby come to symbolize immortality. A symbolic way of cheating our inevitable common-fate, if you like. Love, a mechanism to preserve this symbol, worms its way into the heart and settles there. It flourishes faithfully without fear or doubt, nourishing the parent-child dyad.

***Not yet 20. A spreading black stain on a white satin wedding dress.***

In a very sick child the disease—its symptoms and needs—retards maturation and individuation. By necessity the child becomes dependent and infantilized. Only by conscious effort, deeper insight, a leap of understanding will the child force itself with courage against fate, to break free of the cocoon and become (with luck) next year's butterfly.

Her spirit bubbled forth in an irrepressible personality. She did not so much enter a room as explode like flash-bulbs of Hollywood. With the same *joi de vivre*, she planned her funeral.

*'Mum, I want to go to the funeral parlour to chose my casket—the materials and the colour', she exclaimed. 'But you saw their brochures on the internet', Mum distractedly replied. 'I know, but I need to feel the material—I want the satin, in purple. And I have to meet the people who will bury me', she said unbelievably.*

The paradoxical and in-your-face approach of young adults facing death is surely a mixture of anger, rebellion, and naivete. The 'shock' tactics are a way of overcoming.

In utero we are immersed in holy waters. In the world adults immerse in work, love, creativity. Or fuse with Freud's 'oceanic oneness' in order to escape the fear of loneliness that haunts and harasses us, and diligently reminds us of death. Sickness forces us out of focus so that we are no longer preconsciously immersed. Rather are we thrown unceremoniously onto dry land. Truly a fish out of water, unprepared by evolution.

Freud claimed that 'life as we find it is too hard . . . too many improbable tasks. We cannot do without palliative remedies.' He suggested three therapies—diversions, substitutions, and intoxication. Was Sigmund too hard-nosed and myopic? Can we do better? Can we transcend the improbable?

***She, so young, taught us the ancient art of alchemy—how to transform cynicism into faith.***

Old wisdoms are relearned each generation. Just as an ant cannot comprehend a refrigerator, so an infant cannot grasp death. During life's passage, self-awareness evolves and expands. Time dissolves like sugar crystals in a cup of tea, leaving taste not structure. We step outside life-death and are surprised to find that existence extends beyond Jupiter. An odyssey. A consciousness expanded by effort, not through the artifice of intoxicants, which, after all is said and done, are the tools of false gods. Better is the intoxication of life.

*'The last chemotherapy made me so sick. I don't want to have any more. I want to live out the time I have left.'* Mum sat to the side with a dignity magnified by silence. She suppressed her wishes in order to let her daughter flower.

Tomorrow is a million light-years away. Into the day after tomorrow we can deny and dispose of all

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Corresponding author: Simon Wein, M.D., Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, 2 St. Andrews Place, East Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. E-mail: simon.wein@petermac.org

our fears. Tomorrow and for ever after the sun will rise and set, but today, for now—for an irreducible fraction of a moment—the sun is blazing. Blake the seer-mystic suggested we nurture absurdities by holding ‘infinity in the palm of (our) hand and eternity in an hour’. Thus is self-awareness exorcised from the shackles of time and form.

A leaf, non-randomly floats to earth. A consciousness happens to record this brief passage swinging

wildly from crest to crest, a flash of erstwhile red and orange, sinking, falling. In those moments, content subserves an awareness to beget a presence.

A fearlessness born of a consciousness expanded. Her eyes turned inwards, opaque to the sun.

***The pain mutated into the memory of a sweetness once known.***