

**THE DEPTHS OF THE
SOUL; PSYCHO-
ANALYTICAL STUDIES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649095155

The depths of the soul; psycho-analytical studies by William Stekel

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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WILLIAM STEKEL

**THE DEPTHS OF THE
SOUL; PSYCHO-
ANALYTICAL STUDIES**

THE DEPTHS
OF THE SOUL

PSYCHO-ANALYTICAL STUDIES

Dedicated
to his dear friends
BESS AND OSCAR BLUMENTHAL
in remembrance of
his delightful stay
in Chicago, 1921

THE AUTHOR

THE DEPTHS
OF THE SOUL

PSYCHO-ANALYTICAL STUDIES

BY
DR. WILLIAM STEKEL

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION
BY
DR. S. A. TANNENBAUM

192228
6. 11. 24

LONDON
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRUBNER & CO., LTD.
BROADWAY HOUSE, 68-74 CARTER LANE, E.C.
1921

PREFACE

An old proverb says that every parent loves the ugly duckling most. My book, *The Depths of the Soul*, was, from its beginning, my favourite. It was written in the beautiful years in which the first rays of analytic psychognosis penetrated the darkness of the human soul. The reader may find between the lines the exuberant joy of a discoverer. First impressions are the strongest. It is an unfortunate fact that subsequent impressions lack the vividness, the intensity, the warmth, and the colours of the first emotions.

The great success of this book in many foreign languages has given me incalculable pleasure, because it has served to confirm my own blind love. No other book has brought me so many friends from far and near.

I am happy that my friend Dr. Tannenbaum has devoted his knowledge of the art of translation to my favourite child, and I hope that this translation will bring me many new English friends.

THE AUTHOR.

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THE SECOND WORLD

To poets it is a familiar world. The ordinary mortal wanders about in its wonderful gardens as if he were blind ; he lives in it without knowing it. He does not know where the real world stops and where the fantasy world begins. In the treadmill of grey day the invisible boundaries between these two worlds escape him.

The second world ! What would our life be without it ? What a vale of tears would this globe be were it not for this heaven on earth !

The reader probably guesses what I mean. All of us, the poorest and the richest, the smallest and biggest, rarely or never find contentment in our daily routine. We need a second sphere, a richer life, in which we may dream of everything that is denied us in the first sphere. Ibsen called this "The Great Life-Lie." But is it always a lie ? Did not Ibsen go too far with this characterization ? Who could doubt that this lie is not one of those eternal truths that is so incorporeal that we cannot grasp it, so colourless that we cannot see it, so formless that we cannot describe it.

The child finds its second world in play. The little duties of everyday life are for it only

unnecessary interruptions in its play in the second world. Here the child's fantasy has ample room. It is a soldier, king, and robber, cook, and princess; it rides through a wide world on steaming express trains, it battles courageously with dragons and giants, it snatches the treasures of the earth from their guardian dwarfs, and even the stars in the heavens are not beyond its reach in its play. Then comes the powerful dictum called education and snatches the child out of its beloved second world and compels it to give heed to the first world and to learn things necessary to it in its actual life. The child learns of obligations and submits unwillingly to the dictates of its teachers. The first world is made up of duties. The second world knows no duties; it knows only freedom and unrestrained freedom of thought. This is the root of the subsequent great conflict between feelings and duties. In our childhood we find duties a troublemaker who interferes with our playing; this childish hostility continues with us all through life. Our vocation, the sphere of our duties, can never wholly satisfy us. It is our first world; and even though we seem to accept it wholly, a little remnant of this hostility remains and this constitutes a part of our second world.

Primitive people find their second world in religion. From their primitive fears for the preservation of their lives they flee to their gods, whom they love and fear, punish and