



prospectus 2019

unpsychology

The psychology we have been sold has sold us out.

We've been led down two paths - both leading to dead-ends.

First, a clinical path of disorders, syndromes and treatment plans.

Second, a 'self-help' path of spirit, enlightenment, positive thinking and laws of attraction.

Neither lead us to where we need to be, nor help us tell the stories we need to tell,
nor help us lead the lives we need to live in these troubled times.

Unpsychology is about challenging the assumptions that civilise us; going beyond the psychological boundaries that have been set for us, that narrow us down to a socialised self that fails to see beyond the enclosures.

The rich, deep and perilous soul and the wild ecology of mind,
that emerges from the earth we evolved to live upon, have been lost in the fire.

Unpsychology is a new integration, a furnace in which new souls can be forged and burnished.
It is for soul activists; soul leaders; soul artists and soul makers.

soul-making



Steve Thorp trained and worked as a teacher, counsellor and psychotherapist. He now holds deep soul conversations with individuals, couples and groups to support their soul-making journeys. He developed **21soul** as a new integration of psychology and life practice for turbulent times.

What is the programme about?

21soul is a learning and development project aimed at people who are interested in creative soul-making in these challenging times. It is for soul activists, soul leaders, soul artists and soul makers.

It is a programme aimed at supporting deep psychological development, integral life practice, ecological activism and creativity.

21soul stands for **Twenty First Century Soul** - the force and the energy that we must live with and live through in this fast-moving century. We're facing big changes and unprecedented challenges to our ecological wellbeing, our relationships with each other and our coexistence with the Earth itself.

It is in this context that **21soul** has been devised as a space in which people can come to learn, clear their heads and have good conversations before turning (if they choose) back into the hurry and bustle of history again - or taking another direction entirely!

What makes 21soul different?

At root, our culture has it wrong about what makes us happy and unhappy. **21soul** is about starting to redress the balance, exploring some deeper and more lasting ideas and practices that will help us, as Alice Walker puts it, "to survive in human fashion".

21soul is not a self-help programme in the way that we usually know it. It makes no promise of happiness or riches - rather it questions the very basis of our understanding of being rich and happy in our culture!

Nor does **21soul** claim, as many programmes do, that individual spiritual development is the key to happiness and fulfilment. Spirit is a part of the wider human experience, but only one part - and not always the most important.

This will be a deep and grounded learning experience. It is focused on **you** finding the best way of living and making a difference in the world from a perspective of your highest possible manifestations of self.

Why might you come to 21soul?

First - you come with an awareness of a dissolving world and you may feel anger and despair! You want to make sense of this and to know your emotional response is valid, not simply an internal psychological 'problem'!

Second - you come with confusion or scepticism about the stories our culture tells us about economics, ecology, creativity and happiness. Your intuition tells you something very different. You want a space in which to tell new tales of imagination, hope and joy.

Third - you come with idealism and want to respond to this crisis - as an activist, artist or healer - with energy and creativity. You want to rejuvenate and develop some skills and resilience before going back into the fray!

Fourth - you feel worn out by the crisis, and need nurturing and healing. Strength, joy and self compassion are all practices you would like to develop and you'd like some guidance on finding a less difficult path in the future.

21st century soul...

..is a fresh and radical psychological approach: a place to question cultural assumptions and develop life practices for troubled times; a forum for deep conversations; a space to make change.

..is the deep work we need to do to re-find soul, reconnect with our ecology of mind and redefine relationships.

..is for soul activists, soul leaders, soul artists and soul makers who want to explore ways - individually and collectively - of living, loving, working and creating the world of our futures.

..is for people who want to live with depth, grit, grace and spirit, and make a real difference in their work, art and life.

how the soul-making e-course is structured



The course

The course provides an introduction to the ideas and practices of 'unpsychology' and 21soul. It is intended to be used flexibly and comprises nine lessons or modules. Further details on the course content are on the next page.

The modules are as follows:

Module 1a - Introduction, rationale and the three-fold self

Module 1b - The dimensions of soul-making

Module 2 - A poetic constellation of the self

Module 3 - The deep practices of soul-making

Module 4a - Five lives of soul and shadow

Module 4b - Growing the acorn - character and calling

Module 5 - The realities of existence

Module 6 - Experience and the constellation of the self

Module 7 - Connection, love and ecology of mind

Module 8 - The creative soul emerging

Module 9 - Bringing it together - self and practice into action

At the end of each module, if you choose, you can discuss the ideas, questions and practices with me in a one-to-one coaching session. The questions, activities and course notes are designed to be used flexibly, and can be used as a prompt for group discussion in organisations and learning communities.

The modules

Each module includes a mixture of theory and practice. However, as a guide, the first three modules cover the basic theory and models of 21soul and unpsychology. Modules 4 to 8 are more practice oriented, each containing a number of strands that are woven through with:

1. practices and reflections relating to the **social self**, **soul self** and **ecological self**.
2. references to themes of **adult development** (growing up) and **soul-making** (growing down).
3. aspects of **shadow work**, **active imagination** and **creative development**.

Pacing and support

You can undertake the course in your own time, but once you have signed up, you will be sent a link to download each course pack each month. If you want to do it more quickly (or slowly) you can change the pace at any time.

One-to-one soul coaching is also available to support the course. In setting up your programme for the course, I will schedule coaching sessions at a regularity to suit you. Including a block of coaching sessions at the time you register for the course will give you a good discount, over usual coaching rates. Sessions are most likely to be via phone or Skype, but if you want to meet face-to-face, this can be arranged - subject to cost and geography!

the modules



Modules 1-3 are about the basic ideas and models that provide the foundation for soul-making and soul activism:

Module 1a - Introduction, rationale and the three-fold self: Modern psychology is a reflection of our narrow, shallow culture. In this module you'll learn how we are socialised and 'narrowed down' to the social realm of self - and how this leads to distress and unhappiness. You'll learn about the **three-fold self** - and experience this broader version of 'you' in the world. Finally you'll be invited to explore creative aspects of the three selves, responding deeply and imaginatively to these and to begin your soul-making journey,

Module 1b - The dimensions of soul-making: In this supplementary material you'll be provided with the basic model of **21soul** - the dimensions of soul-making: **up, down, across and through**. You'll learn about Rob MacNamara's Elegant Self and see how this higher developmental level is essential for us to reach if we are to be soul activists and leaders. We'll briefly look at other models of integration, including Ken Wilber's Integral Practice, and explore what can be drawn from these.

Module 2 - A poetic constellation of the self: This module explores metaphorical, imaginative and poetic constellations of self and soul. At the heart of this module is a story of a little girl called Sarah and her 'spirit guide', who tells her about the soul 'three times round'. Engaging with your own stories and creative responses builds on the centrality of story, metaphor and poetic image in soul-making. This is where you start to think about how your soul and ecological self start to play out in the world.

Module 3 - The deep practices of soul-making: James Hillman's radical idea of the energy of our original image - the 'acorn' - is at the heart of this module, and you will be invited to apply this to your own life to get a sense of your 'calling'. An essential aspect of Hillman's ideas is that he locates soul (and shadow) out in the world, not just within and between individuals. In the exercises you'll explore these themes deeply, working on 'practical moves' - ways in which your soul is active in the ecological, political and wider spheres.

Modules 4-8 are based on life practices that emerge from the first three modules. These are the 'five lives of soul and shadow'. Module 9 pulls it all together!

Module 4a - Five lives of soul and shadow: In this supplementary material you'll be provided with a brief introduction to the five tools for twenty-first century soul-building and how these weave across our development and practice.

Module 4b - Growing the acorn - character and calling: Exploring the seeds of your calling and character, you'll get a different sense of your history and begin to open yourself beyond habits and stories you've told yourself about personality, joy and pain.

Module 5 -The realities of existence: Facing world, self and existence is the prerequisite to soulful activism. Here you'll be invited to explore ecological, personal and community themes in relation to the existential 'human givens' and to experience 'what is'.

Module 6 - Experience and the constellation of the self: In this subjective realm of sense, emotion and physicality, you'll explore how memory, dreams and phenomenology all contribute to the constellation of self - and the changing stories we tell of ourselves and the world.

Module 7 -Connection, love and ecology of mind: Connections are not only forged in the social realm, but in the wider 'everythingness' of the ecological self. You'll explore how deep connections are vital to wellbeing and our ability to sustain activism and imagination.

Module 8 - The creative soul emerging: Throughout this course you'll be encouraged to make creative responses to the material. In this module, however, you'll explicitly explore the source and nature of your creative self - and how this might emerge into the future.

Module 9 - Bringing it together - self and practice into action: Asking: 'what does this all add up to?', you'll bring the strands together and revisit the integral framework in order to access a deeper version of 'you' and 'us' we'll need to tackle the challenges facing us humans.

the three-fold self

(This is an edited extract from the first module of the 21soul e-course)

Let's say for the sake of simplicity that human beings – all of us, throughout our history – are born to operate in the realms of three selves.

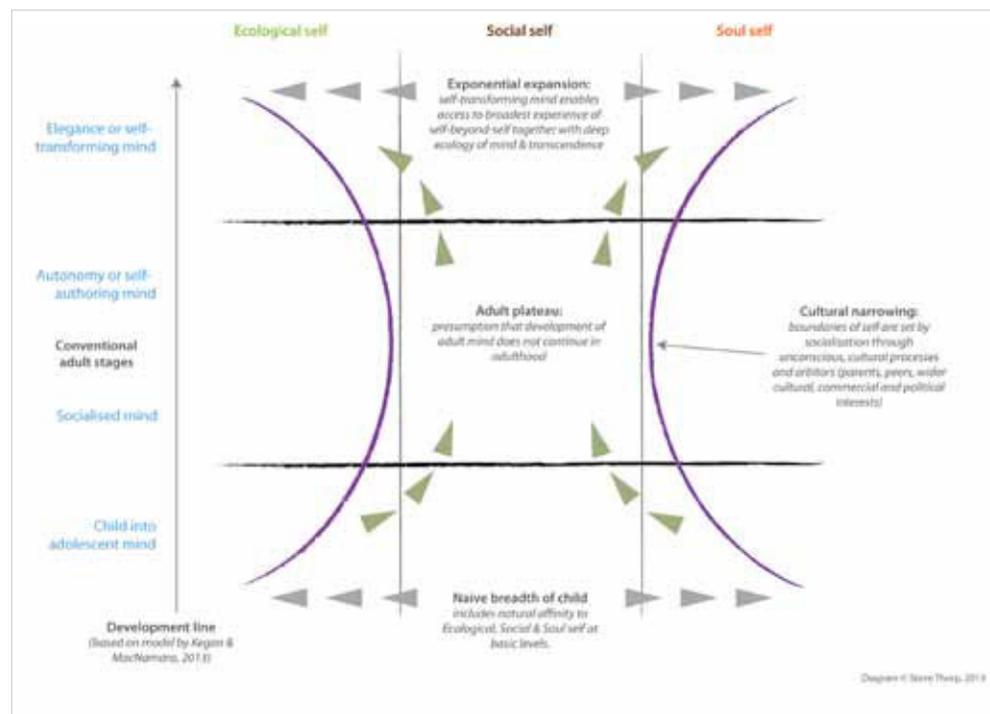
The first, the fundamental *soul self*, contains all our deepest, most authentic talents, virtues and destinies: “in each of us, there is a little voice that knows exactly which way to go”, writes Alice Walker.

This is soul: the dynamic essence of each of us. It is called different things in different traditions – soul, inheritance, core self, true self, strengths and virtues, calling, temperament, character, *daemon* - but can be seen as a combination of all these.

Soul is not a singular self but connected – through metaphor and poetic image, by evolution and archetype, beneath the surface of our lives and waking awareness - to all other souls.

Soul can be a problematic idea for some, but if we are to reclaim some human sense of agency in the world, it must come from this realm.

It may sometimes seem a hopeless task, but to have a sense that we are an individual who matters, whilst recognising the fundamental insignificance of each of us, and having a sense of our deep connections with each other and our planet, we have to explore the intangible, mysterious realm of the soul.



The second is the *social self*. This is the self of learned behaviour, cultural belonging, relationship and interpersonal habits. It is in how we are seen by others, how we respond to others, how we learn to love. It is embedded in the psychological theories of development, attachment and object relations and the assumptions we make about parenting and the determinism of nurture. This is the self that in the contemporary world dominates consciousness, human motivation and behaviour. For better or worse, for richer or poorer, the social, relational self is the one marriage we recognise!

Third, and least acknowledged by modern humanity (but inherent to the 'self' of indigenous peoples) is the *ecological self*. This emerges from the material world on which we evolved – we animals. It exists in the context of phenomena such as night and day, dark and night, body and mind, hill and forest, sea and land, big sky and deep waters.

This 'self' is really not a self at all. It is a constellation of ever-changing experiences of life on a shape-shifting earth. It is the sense of presence and connection that

dissolves the boundaries between humans and our environment, and puts our small human concerns in perspective. In a way, the ecological self is a self of everythingness – though more gritty and grounded than transcendent.

Each human culture has had a own dynamic balance between these three realms, and something is lost if a culture becomes blind to any of these dimensions. Our own civilisation – and the psychology that has developed to explain its mind – is fixated with the social self to the extent that the other two – the soul self and ecology of mind – hardly get a look in. This might explain why we got into the mess we are in, and why we still find it so hard to create the solutions that may, even at this late stage, be possible.

We have a one-track mindset, so to speak; obsessed with the social aspects of human being; finding it almost impossible to locate and access these other two dimensions in meaningful or sustainable ways. As a result, most people believe that they are unhappy because they cannot get their life 'right' in this narrow realm of the social self.

Distress emerges because we live our lives too narrowly; attenuating the richness of soul, connection and ecology into a yearning for self development, recognition and relationship; wishing for something – perfect love – that can never be fully realised.

what people say about 21soul and soul-making

"...it's a cracking good course and much needed in these turbulent times!" (DS)

..."really like the ambition of the course in fostering the growth of 'soul activists' for the 21st century, and the challenge to narrow models of social / psychological functioning" (CL)

"definitely an 'unpsychology', something that reaches into people's lives gently and aids them broaden their perspectives and think more soulfully and act more bravely and ecologically" (AL)

"I found this (the coaching) very helpful and the touch of 1-1 contact...has made it more powerful for me" (EW)

"..exquisite"..."very inspiring" (MS)

And most recently from JT:

"It really has been such a deep journey over the past year or so working with you, and I thank you for your companionship, your kindness and for the light you have shone along my own soul making path. There is still so much to reflect on, but looking back to the beginning of the course I realise that it was from my own need to try and make sense of the fragmentation I was feeling within my life & work that drew me towards working with you. Being able to move at my own pace, and throughout all of life's inevitable up's and down's, I found it to be a real mainstay. As I moved through each module I got to know that this work goes so much deeper than just seeking any quick fixes, and instead challenges & deepens the sense of inquiry further. It breaks the compass and then asks you, are you in it for the long game? And if so, is your trust deep enough to just keep walking? Steve I am in awe of your devotion and of your loyalty towards the path of soul making, and for all the precious gifts of insight you share so humbly with the world. I feel incredibly honoured to have encountered your soul!, and to call you a soul companion on this amazing, crazy, winding road of life!...."

to the soul

*Your gift is welcome to me;
your continuity is true, from one scene to the next.*

*My life is spent following the thread
through the dark passageways until the day is visible ahead,*

*a growing light-ball,
and the thread discarded as I reach the surface*

*and emerge into the world,
watched from above by the circling buzzard.*

*The film of my life,
the drama with an audience of one, is scripted by you.*

*Did you write a part for yourself,
or will you always trust me to interpret your works?*



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