



A Different View of Why We Are Here

By Boris Matthew, PhD, Jungian Analyst

Let's face it: Why *are* we here on the planet? Apparently other people have asked this question before. I just googled “Why are we here on earth?” and got more than ten pages of hits. I'm not going to review them here. If they interest you, you can google and follow up. What I want to do is to suggest a viewpoint that makes more and more sense the older I get. Maybe it will make sense to you, too. And then I will reference an interview with the late psychologist, James Hillman, who elaborates this point-of-view with his interviewer.

First, we're not here to keep the economy humming. We're here to make actual, real-in-the-world, whatever potential is in us. Hillman calls this “the acorn theory.” In the interview he says, “It is a worldwide myth in which each person comes into the world with something to do and to be. The myth says we enter the world with a calling. Plato . . . called this our paradeigma, meaning a basic form that encompasses our entire destinies. This accompanying image shadowing our lives is our bearer of fate and fortune.”

In our culture, “nature and nurture” are the terms usually invoked when people talk about what we turn out to be. The nature part is often thought of as our genetic endowment. “You've got your father's nose.” (That's genes.) “You are so dependent! Your mother spoiled you.” (That's nurture.) Both of these views are essentially materialistic and causal (in the mechanical sense).

There is another view, the one that Hillman talks about, his “acorn theory.” Essentially it's the idea that we grow down into this world from a spiritual dimension, and that gradually we discover—if we are blessed with and have good-enough mentors along the way—what we are supposed to manifest on the planet. I encourage you to read the interview. It's worth your time—especially if you're wondering why you're on the planet.

Here's the link: http://www.personaltransformation.com/james_hillman.html

Boris Matthews, PhD, LCSW practices analytical psychology (a.k.a. Jungian Analysis) at the Ommani Center for Integrative Medicine. He also serves on the faculty of the C. G. Jung Institute of Chicago, Illinois. He has been in practice for over twenty years and has been offering his services at the Ommani Center since 2005. Contact him through the Ommani Center website: www.ommanicenter.com or at Phone 608.217.5184.