

The SACRED SELFISHNESS Workbook

A Companion Volume to:
Sacred Selfishness:
A Guide To Living A Life
of Substance

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Published by SPES, Inc.
31 College Place, Suite D203
Asheville, NC 28801

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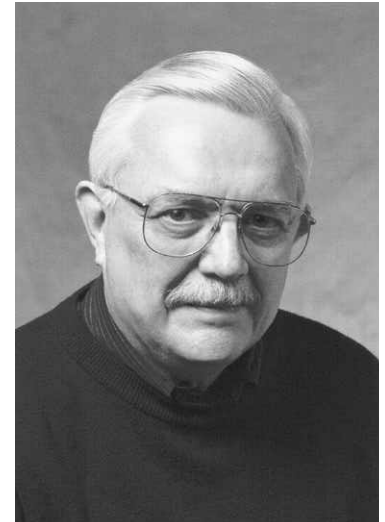
INTRODUCTION

For as long as I can remember I have been a reader. Eventually, I realized that in some form to be a reader is to be a seeker. Once I owned being a seeker as my myth, I then began the quest of finding a vocation that would support it. Through examining the life I had been living I hoped to figure out where my deepest interests, values and enthusiasms lie. Instead, I discovered my woundedness and that seeking involves the search for healing, finding freedom from old values, and perspectives, as a necessary preamble to finding what is authentic within myself. The other surprise that I encountered was that my authentic self is something that also wants to grow, change and evolve every day.

While therapy, analysis and professional training channeled much of my growth, journaling was the foundation of my transformation. Reflections and dreams were the other voice that moved me to view my life in new ways and more completely. Active imagination later became another life-changing and life-deepening experience. Essentially, I am an action-oriented person. But the side of me that is a seeker guided me to question life and reflect upon the experiences of my activities. By midlife, I considered journaling, dreamwork and dialoguing my spiritual practices.

When I suggest these practices to people many of them look at me as if thinking, "How am I going to find the time to do all of that?" My answer is two-fold. First, it doesn't take that much time once you've gotten the hang of it. I spend maybe ten to fifteen minutes a day. This workbook is designed to help you become more skilled at these practices and naturally focused on the most important features of your experiences.

Secondly, these practices actually give me more time and energy. They help me work through and untie my emotional knots without draining myself in frustrating struggles. They help me stay in touch with what is valuable to me and free a continuous flow of creativity into my life. Their results remind me that I am part of life in a greater sense, that I have my own path and that when love is freed within I find a deep well whose source is beyond my understanding.



Bud Harris, Ph.D.

The book *Sacred Selfishness* is written to guide the reader from a conventional life into "a life of substance." It is a path I learned from Jung, other theorists, writers, and from my own experience. It is a path I'm passionate about because I've seen it change so many lives. This workbook is designed to help do just that—change your life for the better. The people I know who have followed these practices for a few minutes a day believe in miracles, because their lives have become more than they could have imagined.

The exercises in this workbook are quietly powerful. They bring clarity, hope and a renewed relationship to ourselves and to life. They are designed to stimulate, inspire and comfort. On some days they will challenge you. On other days they may help you experience the flow of love and creativity that supports life. There also may be days when life is turbulent and these exercises become an anchor helping you hold fast against the wind.

When I began the journey that I share in the opening pages of *Sacred Selfishness*, I was longing to feel more centered, balanced and sure of my vocation. As these longings were filled, I found that I continued to long for something else—a complete emotional relationship to life. Gradually, a daring thought emerged in my mind. Now I longed to be on fire with the love of life.

So I am passionate about what I've written in *Sacred Selfishness* and the path of this workbook designed to accompany it. I am passionate about helping you learn what self-forgiveness and self-love really mean, about truly loving life and being able to grasp the reality that it is through growing self-knowledge that you can have an experience of the Divine working in your lives.

When flying we are told to put the oxygen mask on our own faces before trying to help others. The life-affirming work in this guide is our effort to follow these instructions on a broader level. Jung's whole point about individuation is that the world needs people who have come alive, who embrace risk and struggle to live, whose lives are a sacred task where holiness is passion and the way to the Divine is through self-knowledge.

This workbook is filled with reflections and exercises designed to help you on this path. A life being fully lived is creative, loving and difficult. I doubt that I can convey to you the feeling of the miraculous that you can learn to experience. But, I am inviting you to join me and find out for yourself what it means to live a life of substance.

Bud Harris
Asheville, North Carolina

MANUAL FOR THE JOURNEY OF BUILDING A LIFE OF SUBSTANCE

The journey of “*Sacred Selfishness*” and “Building a Life of Substance” is the most important work you will ever do. The committed pursuit for self-knowledge and self-love brings the power to live a meaningful vital life of purpose, balance, and fulfillment. Use this manual as you read *Sacred Selfishness* and actively engage in the process of building a life of substance. Read and ponder the questions on these pages. There is a space provided for answers. Take your time; this is important work. Feel free to change your mind, add more at a later time, be creative, and risk looking deep within as you discover your authentic self.

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY



1. Sacred selfishness means making the commitment to become a person of substance. The first step on the journey of becoming a person of substance is to look within, to really know oneself, to seek self-knowledge. What might be the costs to you of seeking self-knowledge? What might be the promise of self-knowledge?

COSTS OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE:

PROMISES OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE:

How has this exercise expanded your understanding about the process of self-knowledge?

What do you fear about being in this process or being on this journey? List some of your fears.

How might your need for approval from others like family members, friends, coworkers get in your way?



2. Knowing yourself, really knowing yourself requires recognizing how you are a “captive of normalcy” and may be trapped in your identity. You must examine the past.

What does “normal” mean to you?

Make a list of beliefs, values, preconceptions that have structured your life.

(Ex. **Belief:** I am rational. **Value:** Rationality is the best way to live a balanced life. **Preconception:** Irrational people are impossible.)

Beliefs

Values

Preconceptions

What are the messages you have internalized from parents/society/culture?

How do these messages keep you trapped in your identity?

“We must carefully question everything we’ve been taught to believe as right or wrong if we are going to live the truth of our own lives.” (pg. 58)

What feelings come up as you read and consider these words?

How might these words be challenging to the way you are living your life?

How can questioning everything you've been taught to believe as right or wrong, free you from being trapped in your identity?



3. “If we want our lives to be those of growth and unfolding, we must give religious **(the word religious means to pay careful attention, to pay heed, or to give careful thought to something)** attention to every aspect of our experiences and be willing to see every part of them as manifestations of the human spirit. Learning that we have to seek the experience of life firsthand rather than avoid it or transcend it, that our feelings, problems, crises, struggles and pain are teachers and not just things to be overcome and avoided, will help us pay attention to areas we normally neglect. In the Western tradition the mystics consider these things manifestations of the transcendent God, our higher power, or whatever name we wish to give it.” (pg. 60)

In what ways do you sometimes avoid or try to transcend your life?

Why is it important to stay “grounded” in living life and pay careful attention to every aspect of your experiences?

TOOLS AND FRIENDS FOR THE JOURNEY

“Journaling for most of us begins with the simple method of recording daily events and the feelings they evoke in us. As we become more at home in this practice it usually grows into musing, reflection, and self-examination—into seeking the know ourselves more completely. When we help it, the practice of journaling matures and we discover things about ourselves that we often knew at some level, but were unable to formulate or consciously articulate.” (pg. 147)



5. A journal is an important tool. Paying religious attention through journaling is a process that can help us pay careful attention to our actions, thoughts, feelings, bodies and unconscious.

Journaling suggestions:

1. Allow 10 to 15 minutes a day to record inner and outer happenings.
2. Note strong emotional reactions and reflect on the relationships and situations in which they occurred.
3. Record fantasies, ambitions, ideas and insights.
4. Record dreams and your reflections on dreams.
5. Contents must be considered private and should not be shared.
6. A journal is a safe place to explore, reflect, express and discover who you are.
7. Remember: There is no right or wrong way to express yourself.

We invite you to stop and turn to the back pages in this book titled *Journal*. Take a few minutes to write down an initial question you are facing, a recent event that has effected you, or something you are particularly grateful for. Do any new feelings, thoughts, musings or questions arise? Commit to continuing this process.



6. Imagination is another important tool. Creating objective inner relationships by actively using imagination enables you to intentionally discover and come into relationship with aspects of yourself you don't understand or know little about. (Chap. 6) Active imagination can give voice to parts of you in need of being recognized and heard. Communication with these inner parts can be in the form of drawing, painting, writing, sculpting, dancing and making music. Dialoguing is an especially effective means of listening to and learning from inner parts of yourself like: anger, fear, the inner critic, depression, inner guide or artist. It is a way of making the unconscious known.

How is it possible to dialogue with parts of “yourself?” At first you may feel silly or uncomfortable. If you think you are making it up, don't become discouraged. Stay with the process that is coming from within you. After a time or two, dialoguing will be a natural process to which you will look forward. There is a release of energy that enables you to live with clarity and a depth of awareness and self-knowing; awkwardness is replaced with energy. By all means, write out your dialogues. Writing, either by hand or on the computer, makes the abstract concrete. Start by writing your name and asking a question of some part of yourself.

Wait and trust that the words you hear in your mind in response are true and accurate. Write these words down. Then respond by writing whatever occurs to you, just as in a dialogue with someone in the outer world. Now you have the rhythm and form, just continue listening, responding and writing. It may be helpful to pay close attention to your energy, how you feel at the beginning and at the end.

(Example: If this exercise gives you a headache, dialogue with it.

Gail: Head, why are you aching when you read this exercise?

Head: Because it is the heart that has the answers....

Then continue with the dialogue.)

In this brief exercise, what did you learn about yourself that you didn't know?

“The secret is to realize that we’re dialoguing with real parts of ourselves that have their own autonomy, existence, and power within our personalities. We have to relate to them as if they were people in outer reality, but in greater depth and with complete honesty.”
(pg. 175)



7. Dreams are important friends and allies for your journey. Befriending your dreams may provide direction, comfort and companionship, and sometimes needed confrontation when you are not paying careful attention. Instead of trying to “figure out” what the dream is trying to communicate, just be patient and listen as you would to a trusted friend.

Establish an attitude of valuing your dreams and pay attention by writing them down as soon as you wake up. Write as much detail as you can. Ask questions about your dreams. What is the meaning of this scene or character for my life at this time? What characteristics of mine could these characters be picturing? Remember, it's your dream. What is your inner friend, the dream maker, communicating to you? Reflect on your dreams. Allow them to simmer within, mull them over, linger in your mind throughout the day, as they become part of your life. How do you think valuing your dreams can increase your feelings of being centered and a whole person?

EMBRACING UNKNOWN FORCES ALONG THE WAY



8. "The journey into wholeness means we have to learn to respect the other voice that speaks within us. It means to pay attention to our emotions, thoughts, dreams and fantasies even when they're unpleasant and objectionable." (pg. 249)

Reflect for a few moments on the "I" that you are. Examples: I am active. I am shy. I was taught to always be polite. Using the space below, make a list of 10 "I" statements that have shaped your character/identity. Later you can continue with more.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Now, consider the exact opposite of each "I" statement and write them below. Examples: I am lazy. I am outgoing and never meet a stranger. There are times I am abrasive.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

"Generally when we talk and read about the shadow (the other voice), we think of its being our darker side, and therefore dangerous. Perhaps it is because we repress so much of our energy into it. But it also becomes easy to forget how much of our positive potential it contains. The process of becoming our own person begins with finding out about this shadow, for that is the only way we can learn about the molds that shaped our development. (pg. 244)

“A projection is when we see some feature of ourselves that we’ve disowned in someone else. When the contents of our shadows remain unconscious we’ll see them all around us in other people....

Projections are a natural, unavoidable process and are not a pathological problem that needs to be cured. We can’t stop them, control them, or predict what they will fall on. But we can learn to see them as a great way to learn more about ourselves; like a periscope that can see around corners and over barriers, they can help us discover things about ourselves that are usually walled off. Yet, if we fail to spot them they can get us into conflict after conflict.” (pg. 264)

How are you repressing the opposite of the identities you have learned to value or not value? List 5 examples. (For instance: I drive myself with self-criticism when I think I’m being lazy.)

What are ways you are living a one-sided life?

What about other sides that you have repressed in the SHADOW? Consider the amount of energy it takes to keep the other sides repressed. Frequently we “project” the repressed contents in our shadows.

With your new awareness of projections, look back at you list of 10 character identities and their opposites. Who among your friends, family members, coworkers and acquaintances have these characteristics? Write the names after each statement. Feelings, especially strong, intense feelings help you become clearer about your shadow and the way you project shadow material. (For example: If I wrote “I am active,” I might name my friend Judy as an energetic person I identify with. Under opposites, if I wrote “lazy,” I might list my brother-in-law, Brad, who I think is a slug.)

Go back to the above and get in touch with any strong feelings you may have as you are writing “I” statements, and as you are identifying others with the same characteristics. Write your feelings after each statement. (For example: I might write “admire” by Judy’s name and “disgusting” by Brad’s.)

Often these strong feelings and the statements you make about yourself or others are revealing parts of your shadow. What are you learning about your shadow?

How might you be more complete and have more available energy as you explore, confront, understand, refine and integrate some of your shadow characteristics?

“In our reflections it’s helpful to remember that any experience of the shadow results in uncommonly strong feelings. Strong resentment, intense anger, repugnance, contempt, revulsion, and loathing live close to shadow territory. So do the more positive feelings of deference, intense admiration, and adoration.” (pg. 261)

Don’t forget dream figures and personal reflection in journal writing are useful methods in exploring shadow territory.

IMPORTANT STEPS ON THE JOURNEY:

Self-love and Self-forgiveness

“Growth is what life is about. And we must realize that when we’re beginners in any new phase or activity, especially in something as difficult as the art of self-love, we must be willing to learn step-by-step, experience-by-experience. Otherwise it’s too easy to fall into the popular way of thinking that there should be an easy answer, or that self-love can be a change in attitude rather than a journey. All too often we try to make ourselves think love should be easy, even exhilarating, because we’ve lost our ability to see that our dedication to a great work is rewarding no matter how challenging. Inner work is noble work and I’ve compared it to constructing a great cathedral or temple, a work that begins with building a solid foundation, and continues as we patiently add piece after piece. At the same time it has an ambitious design in mind, a purpose that combines work and beauty, and in this way it reaches beyond ourselves toward the heavens.” (pg. 274)



9. Cultivating self-love is an important part of the journey. Self-love involves knowing ourselves, learning to accept and deal with what we discover.

Consider this beautiful image of building a great cathedral or temple reaching to the heavens. Find several pictures of cathedrals or temples. Spend some quiet time with these pictures pondering their beauty, all the years of planning, hard labor, difficulties and challenges that went into them.

What is your vision for building your life of substance and self-love?

What about the cathedral or temple of your life? What is your design? How will you implement this design? Do you have a firm foundation?

In order to build a life cathedral or temple of substance, which includes self-knowledge and self-love, you must be willing to identify your needs, your hurts, your fears, your feelings and deprivations that have been driving you. Make a list in the spaces below:

NEEDS:

HURTS OR WOUNDS:

FEARS:

FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS:

DEPRIVATIONS:

How has your vision of life, the cathedrals or temples you're building, changed as you have been exploring these ideas?

“Living with self-love means living with inner integrity, accepting our errors with grace rather than shame, supporting ourselves emotionally in difficult circumstances and when we have to sacrifice our immediate pleasure in the service of a deeper value. Admitting our mistakes promptly, apologizing, or acting quickly to heal problems we’ve caused rarely makes anyone think less of us. And remembering our visions of life, the ‘cathedrals’ that we’re building, can support us through the periods when life is sad and difficult.”
(pg. 278)



10. **More about learning to love yourself:** Loving yourself means knowing there are parts you do not like, parts you are afraid of, parts you keep imprisoned. You are a complex person containing all human potentials. (pg. 278)

Spend some time reflecting on the complex person you are by exploring:

Parts of me I do not like:

Parts of me of which I am afraid:

Parts of me I keep imprisoned:

How can you break free from the influences in your past that prevented you from accepting some of the parts of your complex self that you have listed above?

As you explored the parts of yourself above, what feelings and emotions were you aware?

Were the emotions strong? _____

Where did you feel them in your body?

“By accepting the call from deep within ourselves, we release the bonds of fear, obligations, and expectations that have shaped and limited us. This brings a state of peace, of feeling centered in the midst of life’s turmoil, and the ability to recognize the positive values in what appear to be the troubling, threatening moments we encounter. The more we understand that the source of our lives is within us, the easier it becomes to love life and accept its challenges as creative. The price we pay to get this is through the work necessary to keep our courage strong and taking the necessary risks.” (pg. 299)

What keeps you from experiencing emotions or feelings?

Explore more fully the part fear plays.

REFLECT ON FEELINGS AS THEY OCCUR
BY JOURNALING AND DIALOGUING OR GIVING
EXPRESSION TO THEM THROUGH USING ANY ART
MATERIAL YOU MAY HAVE ON HAND. USING ART
MATERIAL IN THIS WAY IS A WAY OF ALLOWING THAT
PART OF YOU EXPRESSION WITHOUT USING WORDS.
IT ISN'T ABOUT BEING AN ARTIST.

MORE STEPS ON
THE JOURNEY
Awakening and Relationships



11. Awakening to life: “Moving through individuation as a quest for self-knowledge becomes a process of revealing to ourselves who we really are. This revelation follows a gradual process, punctuated by startling recognitions that move us toward a deeper sense of our true identities and the possibilities inherent in them.” (pg. 298)

What is the calling coming to you today?

What gets in the way of accepting the call coming from deep within you?

How has the work you have done reflecting, writing in your journal, listening to your dreams, dialoguing with parts of yourself and using this manual helped you hear and accept the call to become a person of substance?

What have you learned about the cost of being on the journey of self-knowledge?

“ . . . It means that to follow our true personalities, we must learn to obey the laws being spoken within us. It means, in other words, we must have what I called earlier a religious attitude toward our inner lives. It’s by following this process that we become people of substance, unique and utterly individual people, our own people, whose presence will serve to give meaning to the lives of others.”



12. Relationships of substance: “For our relationships to grow we must learn that the wholeness we’re seeking is ultimately within ourselves and that our partners are mirroring the potentials within us. If we fail to realize this truth we’ll remain dissatisfied in the long run. Disillusionment comes as we begin to realize our partners don’t offer the completion we’ve longed for and that we’re locked in conflict with the very characteristics that first attracted us.” (pg. 320)

To explore how your partner or other relationships mirror the potentials within yourself, make a list of the characteristics you admire or are attracted to, and a list of the ones you judge negative or resist.

Name of Partner/Relationship **Positive/Attractive Characteristics**

Name of Partner/Relationship **Less Attractive/Negative Characteristics**

Do you recognize these characteristics within yourself? What are the characteristics you like seeing in yourself? Which ones do you have resistance to knowing?

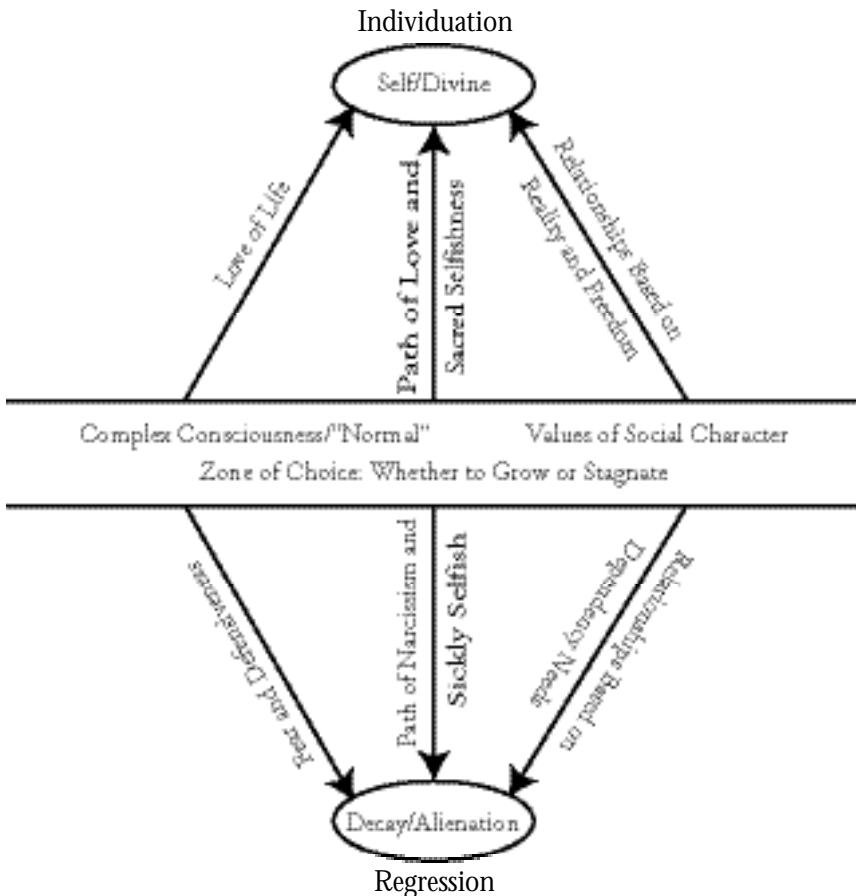
How might your journey of self-knowledge enhance, enrich, strengthen and deepen your relationships?



13. **Living the choice:** The purpose of life is growth. “During the journey of growth we may have to confront the structure of values we’ve been living by, the relationships and jobs we’re in. Growth is not risk-free or guaranteed to be joyful. We may have to make some major changes; we may hurt or disappoint people near to us. Taking such risks is painful and scary.”

What are you willing to risk in order to choose life and growth?

The following chart has been used in seminars to illustrate the path of life and love, individuation and the path of sickly selfishness and alienation. If we fail to grow we begin to stagnate and deteriorate, no matter how good we are at presenting the public face we’re hiding behind.



The choice is yours. Which do you choose?

The journey of self-knowledge, self-love, and building a life of substance enables you to glimpse that everything fits together and in the midst of seeming chaos there is Divine order. You are experiencing the mystery of life, the life force, the Divine, and yourself at the deepest level.

THE JOURNEY: CHOOSING LIFE

“ . . . it’s better to take the risk and suffer the needed losses if there are influences or aspects of our lives of which we must break free. In the long run, breaking free of the forces that imprison our souls is empowering.” (pg. 339)

Two paths, then, with two ends. Which will you choose? The path that leads into the wasteland, however rich and seductive it appears? Or the path through the forest, the path of loving life that begins with self-knowledge.” (pg. 340)

OPENING THE DOOR TO SELF-LOVE ONE DAY AT A TIME

Here are seven principles that are necessary to support self-love and how you can use them every day in your self-development.



1. Remember, Love is difficult, the poet Rilke explains in contrast to the sentimental way we like to think about it. Review your thoughts about love. Do you think it should just bring happiness, ease or at least security? Do explosions, struggles and failure make you think love has failed? Life isn't easy and love can't be easy either.



2. Cultivating self-love is an odyssey with moments of difficulty and joy. It's an excursion into knowing ourselves, of asking whether what we are doing is adding to or diminishing how we feel about ourselves.



3. Self-love challenges the boundaries of how we have fenced ourselves into practicality, conventional wisdom and other people's perspectives. We must gently ask ourselves whose voice are we really hearing in our head? Is it the voice of our heart or of our true self?



4. Self-love isn't self-indulgent, it isn't shopping sprees, outlandish vacations, sneaking sweets or pouting moods. It is the commitment to growing in self-knowledge and our capacity to love. Remember taking the time for reflection isn't egocentric, it is the key to having the kind of vitality that overflows.



5. Self-love is the foundation that determines how strongly we can give and receive love. Without it our relationships will crumble under the slightest storm. Take the responsibility for understanding your fears and needs and facing them in a loving way.



6. Self-love rests on self-forgiveness, being able to understand who we were when we failed ourselves and what needs, hurts, fears and deprivations were driving us. Only then may we meet ourselves with compassion and kindness. This is why our growth in self-understanding brings healing and reconciliation with our essential selves.



7. Self-love is learning how to be tough with ourselves and take the driver's seat in our life when we need to break a destructive mood or habit. We must remember that being tough with ourselves means being committed, energetic, having high standards and tenacity. Being tough with ourselves is the opposite of being hard on ourselves, which means being perfectionistic, self-critical, self-punishing and unaccepting of our mistakes and weaknesses.

HOW TO REACH DR. BUD HARRIS

. . . go to www.budharris.com

If you would like more information about the lives, practices and books of Jungian analysts, Dr. Bud Harris and Dr. Massimilla Harris. Also, if you would like to contact them or invite either or both of them to give a lecture or workshop.