Betrayal and Friendship

Do we begin – or does our '*I*' begin – with betrayal?

Clearly, not all friendships last, and some end in betrayal. It was our own experiences of the impact of friendships betrayed that led us to this theme. However, our discussions led us to question whether the pain, disruption, disbelief, and confusion that arise from betrayal in a particular friendship may contain echoes of a universal 'primal agony' (Garwood, 2001, p. 155). In trying to understand the nature and impact of betrayal in friendship, we were led to question our easy assumptions about the relationship between them and to the possibility that the roots of both may draw their energy from the same deep layers of the human psyche. Both mythology and depth psychology suggest this possibility.

We begin with an exploration of some theoretical issues around betrayal and its place in human development, drawing on object relations theory and mythology. We then look at friendship as one mode of relating, whereby a containing and contained relationship to self and other may be [re-]established. Inevitably, however, such interdependence brings with it the ever-present possibility of [further] betrayal. Finally, we illustrate these ideas with an example, taken from our own experience.

1.   'Betrayal' and 'friend/ship'

1.1   *Betrayal*

The image contained in the word 'betrayal' is a powerful one. The verbal element, the action itself – '*-trayal*' – can be traced back (as can 'tradition') to the Latin verb *tradere*, meaning 'to hand over'. However, it is the prefix '*be-*', meaning 'thoroughly, soundly, much, to excess', which gives the action its emotive force. In the 16th and 17th centuries, 'be-' was commonly used to create new words, as a way of emphasizing the power and energy or comprehensive nature of the action being carried out. 'Besnowball' and 'bethwack', for instance, speak – or sound – for themselves. 'Bepuzzle' suggests a mode of thinking, where the 'puzzler' cannot be satisfied until they have thought a problem through to a satisfactory conclusion.

The sequence suggested by these linguistic origins of the word betrayal seems to be this: firstly, I hand something over – en-trust something of myself – to a trusted other; however, they in turn then 'hand it over' in some way to someone, for whom it was not intended and, by implication, without my knowledge or agreement. The sequence is the same, whether the 'something' I hand over is my pen, my money (left 'in trust', but embezzled or stolen) or my 'word' (a treasured part of myself). But there is more to the emotional 'weight' of betrayal: my internal experience is captured in the emphatic *be-*. I feel as though *I myself* have been handed over, not just an object or a shared secret. I am not only disappointed in my expectations or led astray, but disloyally deceived – given up treacherously to an enemy or to punishment (*Oxford English Dictionary*; see also Vanstone, 1982).

The 'flavour' of the experience of betrayal is reminiscent of the overwhelming nature of envy, as described by Klein (1957), 'a destructive attack on the sources of life, on the *good* object, not on the bad object' (Hinshelwood, 1991, p. 167, italics in original). In a similar way, betrayal too can be experienced as a destructive attack; it strikes at an individual's deeply held

sense of self, leaving them devastated, enraged and bewildered at being treated so unexpectedly and deceitfully or dishonourably.

However, the shock waves of betrayal can go well beyond the individuals involved, stimulating a series of after-shocks, capable of bringing down the edifice of a wide range of relationships. For example, friendship groups and families can be split apart, work teams can become dysfunctional, and intra- or inter-organizational partnerships can founder: 'Issues of betrayal always involve central processes of change and stability in the moral and social boundaries of collectives of people and hence in their sense of belonging and identity.' (Ben-Yehuda, in Sievers, 2007, p. 1.) While betrayal can occur without friendship, it is the fact that friendships are built on trust and openness – 'the confident revelation of the self to a trusted other' (Silver, 1989, p. 275) – which makes them particularly vulnerable to betrayal, magnifying the impact of the perceived 'treachery'.

Writing about betrayal and leadership, Krantz talks of the toxicity and corrosive impact of betrayal: 'persecutory anxiety, heightened mistrust and blame … splitting … austere, constricted thought and compromised ability to relate' (2006, p. 235), while Sievers (2007) describes the way in which the cynicism resulting from betrayal can become 'part of the organization as a whole' (2007, p. 2). Both of these writers are concerned to go beyond betrayal as an individual experience, in order to understand its organizational origins and impact. Thus, Sievers' 'working hypothesis' is that 'betrayal and cynicism, in the context of organizational transformation, cannot primarily be regarded as the outcome of individual psychopathology' (p. 2), while Krantz's 'central hypothesis' is that one dimension of betrayal which, in an unexpected turn, he calls 'betrayal in the service of a higher purpose' or 'virtuous betrayal', may be 'an essential element of leadership and organizational change' (p. 222).

Betrayal is, therefore, a complex phenomenon. If it is not worked through to the point of forgiveness (Hillman, 1975), its effects may last a lifetime or even beyond, in a way that parallels the cross-generational impact which friendship can inspire. When the destructive effects of betrayal are experienced in a group or organizational context, a vicious cycle can be set up that becomes embedded in an organization's culture.

1.2   Friendship
The derivation of the words 'friend' and 'friendship' also tells a story. They are derived from the present participle of a proto-Germanic verb meaning '*to free*' or '*to love*', both of which evoke powerful associations in relation to the experience of friendship and betrayal. Friendship is one of C.S Lewis's 'four loves' (Lewis, 1961), and, because we sense that we are loved in a close friendship, we can indeed feel 'free', free to 'be ourselves': '[modern] friendships are grounded in the uniquely irreplaceable qualities of partners – their 'true' or 'real' selves, defined and valued independently of their place in public systems of power, utility and esteem' (Silver, 1989, p. 274).

Because we feel free more fully to 'be ourselves' in friendships of this kind, it is likely that we will relax some of our habitual defences and 'open ourselves' to the other. As a result, we construct together the conditions under which betrayal can have maximum impact, striking, as it were, at an undefended heart.

However, the words 'friend' and 'friendship' are old, appearing already in *Beowulf* (around 725 CE). As a result, the idea of friendship has evolved many levels of meaning, historical, cultural and philosophical. For example, even translating of the Greek *philia* as 'friendship'

and *philos* as 'friend' has been shown to be problematic and potentially misleading (see Fraisse, 1974; Konstan, 1997).

Before considering further the relationship between betrayal and friendship, we shall look briefly at the impact on our understanding of friendship caused by three major shifts in consciousness in western society, each amplifying the effect of the others. Without this historical perspective, the modern tendency to view friendship solely as an intimate, private affair makes it hard to perceive the interplay between friendship and betrayal in public and organizational contexts.

The most significant, historical shift may be the splitting off of friendship from the public into the private sphere. The modern conceptualization of friendship – as essentially personal, private, voluntary, unspecialised, informal, and non-contractual – echoes our culture's 'great emphasis on relationships in the intimate sphere, especially love relationships' (Taylor, 1991, p. 45; see also Oliker, 1998). As MacIntyre puts it, friendship has been '*relegated* to private life … for the most part the name of a type of emotional state rather than a type of social and political relationship.' (1985, p. 156, italics added.) As a result, the idea, essential to the classical friendship tradition, that friendship not only holds society (the *polis*) together, but is more important even than justice and should, therefore, be the prime concern of legislators, comes as a major surprise to modern sensibilities (Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, …). In our day, by contrast the 'problem' of friendship has, as Fraisse puts it, been 'lost'; it is a 'problème perdu', without 'political value' (Fraisse, 1974, pp. 168-9), and, therefore, with no relevance to the problematics of organizational life. The 'solidarities' offered by friendships have become 'hidden' (Spencer and Pahl, 2006).

If friendship appears at all today in relation to politics, it tends to be as matter of mistrust or scandal. Where the classical, medieval and renaissance worlds would have been suspicious of a leader who did *not* work with and through friends, we are more likely to set up official inquiries into the motives and behaviours of those who *do*.

One impact of splitting friendship off into the private sphere is that its central importance in the lives of individuals is simply not reflected in the official discourse of organizations – and hence also of university departments of organisation studies or management and leadership training. As Hunt observed in relation to theology: 'Everyone has friends, but by reading contemporary theology one would never know it.' (Hunt, 1994, p. 1.) As a result, Sievers' observation on betrayal and cynicism could apply equally well to friendship in organizational contexts. He describes the 'enormous gap between the frequency with which social phenomena like betrayal and cynicism appear in everyday life and the attention actually paid to their scientific conceptualization and understanding (2007, p. 2; see also Grey and Sturdy, 2007).

A second, related shift in consciousness is the idealisation of the individual, which occurred so strongly in the Romantic period. As Williams (1988) points out, the meaning of the word 'individual' has completely reversed over time. The original sense was that we cannot be 'divided' from those around us – 'no man is an island'. We are indeed *in*-dividual: literally, we cannot be separated or 'cut apart', the Latin *individuus* being a translation of the Greek *atomos*, that which cannot be cut. Today, 'the individual' is no longer meaningless separate from others and from their context, and has come instead to mean the opposite: the smallest unit into which we *can* be divided. This notion of the 'individual' further blurs the social and political impact of the bond of friendship, one outcome, perhaps, of the view captured in

Margaret Thatcher's famous (1987) assertion: 'there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families.'

The third major shift in thinking to affect the notion of friendship is the 18th century philosophical/ethical perspective of utilitarianism. The underpinning notion of utilitarianism – that 'value depends entirely upon utility' (Jevons, in Kerr, 1966, p. 40) – has a particular impact on the relationship between friendship and organization, because of the place of utility in the western friendship tradition. Aristotle's three-tier model of friendship, the most important foundation for this tradition, acknowledged utility as the basis for one type of friendship, fundamental in some respects, but traditionally seen as the most limited or underdeveloped:

> those who love each other because of the useful do not love them for themselves, but in so far as some good accrues to each of them from the other … the useful is not something that lasts, but varies with the moment; so, when what made them be friends has been removed, the friendship is dissolved as well, in so far as it existed in relation to what brought it about. (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 8, 1156a10, 1156a21-2).

Instrumentalism lies at the very core of capitalist relations, in which labour, and hence labouring subjects, are constantly objectified and commoditised. In this context friendships are likely to figure as an outbreak, a rash or irritant, in work relations, as they paradoxically threaten to 'betray' the material relations of production.

In Aristotle's hierarchical model, the 'highest' point is disinterested friendship – *vera amicitia* or *amicitia perfecta* – in which the well-being of the other is of primary concern: 'those who wish good things for their friends, for their friends' sake, are friends most of all; for they do so because of the friends themselves, and not incidentally.' (*ibid.*, 1156b7.) However, the lens of utilitarianism has magnified the most basic level of utility-based friendship, to the exclusion of the pursuit of virtue and commitment to the good. (It is also worth noting that the motivation for the intermediate level of friendship in Aristotle's model – namely, *pleasure* – is also a modern obsession and a source of distraction from friendship's wider organisational and political potential.)

An obvious point to make, based on these preliminary reflections, is that there is no fixed, individualistic or *essential* ontology to friendship. Useful thought Aristotle's model may be for provoking thought, there are variations from and within the classical, western friendship tradition itself: 'neither this [classical, western friendship] tradition nor the concept of friendship within it is homogenous' (Derrida, 1988, p. 634). Whatever ontology properly deserves to be attributed to friendship must be based in some appreciation of a *relational process* that moves relatively in and out of focus over time. In other words, while in commonsense terms we may think of friendship as obtaining between autonomous, indeed autarkic, subjects which are relatively fixed in time and space, introspective observation of the phenomenon yields a quite different and counter-commonsensical picture. Under this view, friendship is a label of convenience that one uses to characterize a complex set of phenomenological sense impressions, perceptions and emotions accumulated over time and whose intensity will vary according to supporting conditions. One can go days, months and perhaps even years without a given 'friend' impinging on one's consciousness only to have an event (an email, a letter, a telephone call, a personal encounter) re-evoke the full passion of friendship in an instant, as it were. This aspect of the phenomenon led Aristotle to characterize friendship as a psychological 'disposition' – *hexis* – that one brings to social relationships (French, 2007).

Rather than disposition, *per se,* Derrida (1997) prefers to stress the *active* dimension of friendship. As he frames it, 'The disposition, the aptitude, even the wish – everything that makes friendship possible and prepares it – does not suffice for friendship, for friendship *in act*' (*ibid*., p.17, original emphasis). In other words, the *psychological disposition* forms a necessary (but not *sufficient*) condition for the *social act* of friendship in this scheme. He does acknowledge, however, that there can be a narcissistic 'virtuality' to friendship whereby an entire 'relationship' comes into existence solely as a projected fantasy of one onto another. Based on his deconstructionist reading of friendship in Aristotle's *Eudemian Ethics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, Derrida suggests that an asymmetry can obtain between the parties that form a friendship. Love being a central ingredient of friendship, there arises a potential incommensurability between the one who loves and the be-loved insofar as the love of the lover may be entirely unrequited. Hence the 'friendship' can, in principle, exist exclusively in the mind of the one who loves, which shades of solipsism open an aporia with respect to the semantics of friendship.

2.   Friendship → betrayal?

Up to this point, we have assumed a more or less 'natural' sequence, whereby friendships grow in mutual trust only to be betrayed: friendship → betrayal. However, insights from mythology and archetypal psychology, on the one hand, and from object relations theory, on the other, have led us to question this assumption.

2.1   To betray is human…
In his paper on betrayal, James Hillman uses the myth of the Garden of Eden to suggest that betrayal is a natural and necessary stage in the 'unfolding' of human consciousness, provided this evolution is not 'blocked by the negative vicissitudes of revenge, denial, cynicism, self-betrayal and paranoid defences' (1975, p. 81). Perfect trust – or 'primal trust', as he calls it – is a largely unconscious condition that can only be represented in terms of myth. It is a model or ideal of human relating, to be aspired to, but, ultimately, unattainable.

Hillman uses the story of Eden and 'the Fall' to suggest that being human involves living, moment by moment, inextricably caught in the tension between good and evil. The 'knowledge' of good and evil, in this sense, does not mean the ability to make easy distinctions and choices between these extremes, but rather to experience the relationship between them as an ever-present tension, with no certainty that the choice of the good will not turn, uncontrollably and without choice or intention, into its opposite. In Hillman's view, it is only when we understand and accept the inevitability of a co-existence between trust and betrayal that we can begin to live fully as responsible humans – and, he suggests, to live with the possibility of forgiveness.

When viewed in this way, all relationships of trust, *of necessity*, contain within them the potential for betrayal. The closer the relationship, the greater the potential to become lulled by the possibility of 'perfect' trust – *amicitia perfecta* – and, as a result, the greater the devastation of betrayal. The potential asymmetries or virtuality within friendship relations, described by Derrida, can have an equally strong impact through a betrayal that may be unintended but powerfully experience.

2.2   Betrayal first?

Object relations theory could be taken to parallel, in psychoanalytic terms, the truths represented by the myth of the 'fall from Eden'. The object relations view of human development posits a state in the newborn infant analogous to 'primal trust', where 'me' and 'not-me' are not yet differentiated (Winnicott, 1965). The infant's sense of self is only learned though the ongoing sequence of relationships and experiences whereby his/her needs are sometimes met, but also, inevitably, frustrated. Theoretically, we might propose that if an infant's needs could be *perfectly* met, then he or she might come to believe – or *continue* to believe – that the whole universe existed only for them, or even that they *were* the universe, the single point ('*uni-*') around which everything turns ('*vertere*').

Such a state of perfect containment is, however, clearly impossible in reality. This would be to conceive the infant as simply a blank canvas on which the pattern of his or her personality and needs gradually emerges. While this might be a comforting thought, it is misleading: the child's hunger, rage and fear have real impacts on the world around him or her – effects that, in the child's imagination, might provoke a retaliation or feelings in others for which the child feels guilt. The infant is, in short, in a relational world in which it exists as 'an other' to others. This state of being-for-another drives a profound anxiety: am I anything myself? Thus, a state of betrayal – of being 'handed over', with one's existential self-knowing dependent on others – could be thought of as the natural, original state. In this case, friendship can no longer be thought of as the natural starting point, but rather as a unique context, in which I may bind another to cognise and recognise me. The warmth of friendship is the warmth of a blanket, wrapped and clasped, but always in danger of blowing away, or being torn from my back by another, or by fate itself.

Using such concepts as the 'good' and 'bad' breast, and 'splitting', Melanie Klein's language captures vividly this notion of the coexistence, from the earliest days of the individual's existence, of opposed states – 'the knowledge of good and evil'. Klein's 'paranoid-schizoid position' describes a state of mind engendered by an experience of a world – both the external world and the inner world of conflicting emotions – seen as split (*skhizein*) into good and bad, loving and persecutory. Perceiving the world in this way, the infant becomes dominated by the fear (*paranoia*) that results from sensing the presence of these split-off, persecutory elements. However, Klein's notions of the 'depressive' position and the desire for reparation – for making good the guilt engendered by harm, real or fantasized – also point to the possibility of healing through relationship.

In his development of Klein's ideas, Wilfred Bion questioned the sense, inherent in Klein's language, of the sequential progression from the paranoid-schizoid 'position' (Ps) to the depressive 'position' (D) being an 'achievement'. Instead, Bion emphasized the idea of a constant, and necessary, *oscillation between* these two basic positions. He represented this idea in his formula, Ps ↔ D (Bion, 1963). By this, he wished to underline the fundamental coexistence of, and constant interaction between, separation/ fear/ guilt and relatedness/ repair, between, one might say, betrayal and friendship: 'For him the double function, Ps ↔ D, is at the center of a theory of mind. It represents the elemental and ubiquitous presence of the mind's ability to divide-and-unite.' (Eigen, 1993, p. 213.)

These ideas challenge any comforting illusions we might have that our basic psychic state as humans is one of goodness and stability, which is, somehow *un*-naturally interrupted and destabilised by events. Friendship may, after all, not be the starting point, the 'natural' state, as it were, which is destroyed by betrayal, as a form of deviant event. The 'death' of which Genesis warns – 'of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die' (Genesis 2:16) – is not an end, but a beginning. It is

the moment in which 'humans' are born, or emerge from the chrysalis of the ideal – Adam and Eve – into the hard reality of knowledge of our state.

In a sense, therefore, betrayal could be thought of as coming *before* friendship, because friendship always contains the possibility of betrayal, whereas without this original betrayal in 'the garden' we would not be human. Our '*I*' begins with betrayal. It is an idea which echoes Winnicott's (1963) conclusion that the 'fear of breakdown', which he observed in clinical work with his patients, was 'a fear of a breakdown that has already been experienced'.

Following Bion's Ps ↔ D, we suggest, therefore, that the reality of the relationship between betrayal and friendship is not *friendship → betrayal*, but should be represented as an oscillation, a movement between, or a synchronous state: *betrayal ↔ friendship*. In our heart of hearts, we carry *both* experiences together: they coexist, so that if one is dominant, the other is always present as a 'shadow'.

3   Case illustration

3.1   The case: Personal friendship in a professional context (first person narrative)
The case involves is a friendship I established as an undergraduate with a post-graduate in my department. This man, who I'll call Mark, was introduced to me by a member of faculty who suggested that, given Mark's specialist knowledge of a particular subject, I could benefit from his guidance with an assignment I was working on. I duly approached Mark who, having talked through the assignment, gave me a lengthy reading list that I began to work through steadily. To Mark's evident surprise, I returned a couple of weeks later to discuss the readings with him and, having found some areas of common interest, we began to meet socially on a regular basis. Mark completed his Ph.D. at the same time as I graduated and, although we went our separate ways, the friendship was maintained through regular postal correspondence over eight years, thus surviving various international travels and periods of separation. While I was busy with my post-graduate studies, Mark was trying to establish a career both as a writer of fiction and academic texts. Despite efforts to secure an academic post, which, from my point of view – even at the time – seemed self-defeating, he was never successful. His intellectual cynicism, which was already highly cultivated when we first met, deepened significantly with the passing of the years, erring increasingly toward outright nihilism.

Mark became reclusive, living alone and supported by state benefits in a geographically remote, rented, country cottage. In hindsight, one might say that, despite no lack of intellectual sophistication on his part, Mark's life resembled a caricature of the 'struggling artist'. I continued to visit him at least four or five times a year, and we spent a great deal of time in each other's company. With the passage of time, however, I began to wonder about Mark's sanity. There was a history of mental illness in his family and I thought he was showing signs, insofar as I understood the condition, of manic depression (although I think Mark, who was well read in psychology and psychoanalysis, would have vehemently disagreed with such a diagnosis). In addition to the bouts of what I took to be manically productive writing activity and subsequent periods of deep depression and despondency, I noted a harmful pattern to Mark's relationships. He would establish a close friendship with a partner or academic collaborator, say, and then at a certain critical point find ways of irrevocably undermining them. The consequence of such betrayal was always painful for both parties and resulted in a great deal of acrimony.

Two developments seemed to be presage the same fate for our friendship. The first was my discovery and pursuit of Buddhist philosophy and meditation (which gradually led me to cast off what I now view as the shared adolescent cynicism that formed the bond between Mark and myself); and second was my meeting and marrying Sarah. Although still not in paid work, by this time Mark had set up home with a female partner and her nine-year-old daughter. There were a few reciprocal visits between the two families for a year or so, but the relationship between Mark and me became strained. Events reached a point of no return when, in written correspondence, Mark sent back some Buddhist books and tapes that I'd lent him with a message that was designed to insult and hurt, both personally and professionally. He insinuated, for example, that I was intellectually ill-equipped and unlikely to complete my Ph.D., and also explicitly derided – with literary and critical aplomb – the Buddhist philosophy which Sarah and I had embraced.

Receipt of the last letter from Mark was, for me, a moment of betrayal. It prompted a kind of mental revolution and necessitated a complete re-evaluation of the memories that had theretofore formed the imagined basis of our friendship. Indeed, it was an event engineered to have just such a destructive effect, from which friendship would be irrecoverable. Yet, for all that, friendship *had* existed and continued to exist in memory. The very recounting of this tale would be impossible without its survival in that sense, even though the possibility of 'lived friendship' – co-present fellowship – with Mark has been extinct for more than twenty years.

There is a short addendum to this tale: on my return to academic life following a two-year period of formal meditative retreat that I embarked on shortly after the breakdown of this friendship and completion of my Ph.D., I made a curious discovery. During a search for employment I learned from a colleague who ran a research centre that Mark had presented a paper, while I was still on retreat, jointly authored by Mark and myself. Apparently, this 'joint' work featured a substantial amount of data taken from my Ph.D. To the best of my knowledge, Mark never sought my consent in this 'collaborative' endeavour. Quite what his motives were in taking this step remained a mystery to me for many years, but perhaps make more sense when viewed from the theoretical matrix being explored in this paper.

3.2   Interpretation

We see illustrated in this narrative several dimensions of the theoretical ideas explored in the preceding discussion. In particular, there is a narcissism and asymmetry nascent in the narrator's account, partly recognized and realized at the moment of betrayal. The narrator wonders, with some reason, whether there ever existed a *mutual* friendship between Mark and himself or whether the 'friendship' was sheerly the virtual product of projective and, ultimately, narcissistic imagination. The relationship was not born of equality. It started as a fellowship based on the narrator's admiration of Mark's intellectual prowess, wit, cynical disposition, and so forth; qualities that he saw as being desirable and worthy of emulation. To that extent, Mark played the role of mentor in the narrator's mind. Whether or not this basis of 'friendship' was mutually understood or accepted is, in Derrida's terms, genuinely 'undecidable' – a matter of retrospective conjecture. There seemed also to be a certain inevitability to the ending of the friendship; knowledge on the narrator's part that betrayal would surely befall this friendship, given the patterning of Mark's relationships in general. To that extent, friendship and betrayal were, at the very least, co-nascent in this drama. The death of the friendship was, to that extent, immanent in its existence. There may even be a case, in terms of the psychodynamic argument advanced here, for usefully thinking of betrayal as *preceding* the friendship.

In the example, we move away from questions of ontology and attend more to phenomenology, albeit that the former will inescapably accompany our attempts in this regard. As stated earlier, we want to examine the moment of rupture and radical reassessment of relationship that occurs with the perceived betrayal of friendship. Derrida makes a general observation with respect to survival and death in friendship that may help our understanding of the rupture of betrayal. He suggests that the demise of friendship is immanent in the very existence of friendship. For him, 'surviving is at once the essence, the origin and the possibility, the condition of possibility of friendship; it is the grieved act of loving. *This time of surviving thus gives the time of friendship*' (1997, p. 14, emphases added). Clearly, the sense of friendship can survive for a friend who survives the physical death of another (friend), but can it survive perceived betrayal? It seems to us that the answer to this is both 'yes' and 'no'.

As represented in the story, Mark becomes something of a scapegoat for the narrator's cathartic impulse. The story is told so as to cast the narrator as undeserving victim of Mark's treacherous and malign tendencies. Yet we should be suspicious of this account since the narration is, in itself, something of a counter-betrayal; that is, Mark is betrayed in retrospect by the narrator through the rendering of this story. The likelihood is, we acknowledge, that the narrator was complicit in the ending of the relationship, wanting it to terminate every bit as much as did Mark. Nonetheless Mark is portrayed as the villain and instrumental agent in this drama of betrayal.

4.   Conclusion

Betrayal constitutes a peculiar form of breakdown in a friendship relationship. There is something radical about the phenomenological rupture that marks betrayal which is not present in friendships that expire over a longer period of time. Friendships that arise out of proximity and co-presence in a professional context may be experienced as intense and profound at the time but die out when the parties concerned move on and no longer need to interact or collaborate so frequently. For example, the strong bonds that can build between, say, undergraduates working on the same course together and preparing for finals under conditions of perceived adversity – the 'band of brothers' syndrome found in so many varying contexts – can all but disappear upon graduation. With the passing of years the intensity of such friendships is consigned to nostalgic memory and, while there may still be some feeling of fellowship that arises when one meets by chance or at a formal reunion, it is of a much lesser order than when – dictated by purpose and supporting conditions – passions were running high.

In this paper, we have explored an aspect of this relationship between friendship and betrayal. The exploration has led us to a conclusion we had not expected at the outset, but one which we believe is supported both by psychodynamic theory and by our own experience. Our conclusion is that the well-known, and apparently obvious, sequence whereby friendship is undermined by betrayal may be misleading precisely as a result of its familiarity. We suggest that the experience of betrayal may have origins that are rooted in the same fundamental level of the psyche as those of friendship. The conceptual frameworks of archetypal psychology and object relations both suggest that the individual's sense of 'me-ness' is only achieved at the cost of a deep sense of betrayal, of separation from a primary integrated state: a 'fall' from the 'Eden' of primal omnipotence. This is the moment at which the infant is shocked out of their sense of being the centre of a universe around which everything revolves:

My naked simple Life was I;

<center>…</center>
<center>I felt no dross nor matter in my soul,</center>
<center>No brims nor borders, such as in a bowl</center>
<center>We see. My essence was capacity,</center>
<center>That felt all things;</center>
<center>(Thomas Traherne, in Nicholson & Lee, 1917)</center>

From this perspective, the pain caused by the rupture of betrayal draws some of its intensity from the fact that it returns the betrayed person to the deep-seated sense of abandonment from the friendship had, for a time, rescued him or her. Betrayal may be an inevitable part of human experience – may even contribute to the moment at which our sense of 'I' begins; friendship, for its part, may be equally present as an occasional, reparative gift.

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