chapter five

Depression, Madness & Addiction

IT IS A MAD, MAD WORLD. Artists know this better than most, suffering accordingly. This chapter explores the complex dynamic of depression and its sometimes remarkable effect on art and creativity. We look at artists and some of the great entrepreneurs who likewise appear to exhibit traits of instability and pathology. The effects of alcohol and drugs are also assessed, with the fatal addictions of Bill Evans and Ernest Hemingway serving as case studies.

> The first requirement for an artist is that he must be able to love and be prepared to suffer.
> SOUTH AFRICAN ARTIST JEAN WELZ[1]

> The more crises you have, the more material you have.
> PAUL MCCARTNEY[2]

The myth of Actaeon and Diana tells the story of the hunter Actaeon who spies the goddess Diana while she is taking a bath. He falls in love with her and, in so doing, is transformed into a stag, only to be hunted down by his own dogs. This is a story not just of the dark powers of the artistic muse, but also of the powers that haunt those driven to take opportunity to market.

So many great artists have suffered inner torture. Such is the stigmatisation of depression that rejection is common currency. Breaking through to new ground seems to incur unbearable costs and yet, despite the derision of critics and betrayal of "friends", so many great artists have not merely survived, they have prevailed. In their fight for survival, for vision and self-expression, their wounding has become their source of strength and inspiration. Søren Kierkegaard called this level of stress and anxiety "the dizziness of reason". According to T.S. Eliot it was, in fact, "the handmaiden of creativity". The great 20th-century Southern writer William Styron, who famously chronicled his own descent into severe depression in his Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness, stated that the disease of depression remains "a great mystery...[yielding] its secrets to science far more reluctantly than most of the other major ills besetting us".[3] In an article published in Vanity Fair, Styron observed that "the pain of severe depression is quite unimaginable to those who have not suffered

it, and it kills in many instances because its anguish can no longer be borne. The prevention of many suicides will continue to be hindered until there is a general awareness of the nature of this pain. Through the healing process of time - and through medical intervention or hospitalization in many cases - most people survive depression, which may be its only blessing; but to the tragic legion who are compelled to destroy themselves there should be no more reproof attached than to the victims of terminal cancer."[4]

While the "right" levels of depression can serve as a creative instigator, as we shall see, at other levels the behaviour it induces can become pathological. And, to be sure, much pathology is present in the observable patterns of behaviour of many artists and innovators. Said Don Henley of his early years with the Eagles: "The creative impulse comes from the dark side of the personality so we worked it good."[5] Such was the Eagles' success that Volume 1 of their collation Greatest Hits (1971-1975) stands as the biggest selling album of the last century, with more than 42 million units sold globally to date.[6]

Supporting Henley's view, actor Rob Lowe has stated that, at some point, people in his line of work simply have to access a masochistic streak to deal with, firstly, the rejections of the business and then, if they make it, the unrelenting scrutiny of success. So saying, he called his craft a barbaric business and that he'd never met anybody drawn to show business who was "completely and utterly healthy". There was, he claimed, always some sort of need or dynamic that they were unaware of, a dynamic that drew them into this life. Astutely, Lowe also pointed to the trap of success: that once you've made a name for yourself you really have to do some hard work on yourself to move on and avoid self-detonating. As he put it: "You really, really have to work to grow if you find success in this business - because people want to keep you fat and happy and immature and not connected and not paying attention. So I have a theory that you stop growing emotionally at the very age you become famous."[7] Lowe was obviously talking from experience: during his days as a Brat-Pack actor, his star was one of the brightest in the firmament: talented and handsome, yet hounded by the effects of liquor and easy sex. Following the publicity resulting from one of his binges, Lowe finally quit drinking and turned his life around. Today the West Wing actor is widely regarded as one of the mature seniors of his profession.

J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books, is one artist who took to psychotherapy to deal with the vicissitudes of success. Her story is worth noting. Rowling who, with her sister, had a difficult relationship with her father, describes herself as not being "very good at being young". She fled home as soon as she could, studying classics and French at Exeter University. By the age of 28, following a brief stint in London and a disastrous marriage, Rowling was broke, divorced, the mother

of a six-month-old daughter, clinically depressed and suicidal. In the late '90s and in this state of mind, she holed up in Edinburgh, living on the dole and writing what would be the first of her seven Harry Potter novels. Following many rejections, Bloomsbury paid her an advance cheque of £1500 for the Potter manuscript. Not foreseeing the success that was to follow, her publishing editor, Barry Cunningham, advised her to quit writing and focus instead on getting a teaching job. Ten years later, though now staggeringly wealthy and famous, the stress and tension of the emotional struggle of her earlier life was still visible - a 2007 TV documentary about her shows a woman still recovering from the pain of her prior impoverishment and heartache. Asked five years later if it had taken time to process the dynamics of material success following so many years of disappointment, she replied: "Well it has now. But there was a definite lag. For a few years I did feel I was on a psychic treadmill, trying to keep up with where I was. Everything changed so rapidly, so strangely. I knew no one who'd ever been in the public eye. I didn't know anyone to whom I could turn and say. 'What do you do?' So it was incredibly disorientating." Although she'd sought psychotherapy when at "rock bottom" during the first drafting of Potter, Rowling acknowledged that in a newer and upward phase of her life, she'd been forced to seek help again, "when my life was changing so suddenly - and it really helped".[8]

While we might be critical of anti-social behaviour in the business world – the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Strauss-Kahn case is worth noting here -within the creative arts, a degree of good-natured tolerance is generally expected. Thus, deviant or socially outrageous behaviour is typically accepted, seen as normal, as just another day at the office. Two hundred years ago, William Blake wrestled with the self-same issues of what was socially acceptable and what was not - and what should or could be done about it. In The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, the poet took the line typical of most artists: "Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires." Such views had long been commonplace and still are today - witness the current slew of revelations emanating from the Harvey Weinstein affair. So, for artists such as Hemingway, Picasso and Pollock, the manic outbursts, spectacular tantrums and nights of social violence were widely regarded as just part of the creative package, emblematic of the way they were. To some extent such behaviour could be construed as the outpouring of a burdened spirit. Without condoning such behaviour, in the search for innovative business practice, perhaps we should ask where one world stops and the other begins. As an aside, therefore is there any correlation between a firm's inability to generate institutional insight and creativity and, in the main, those internal policies that see erratic, eccentric behaviour as some kind of aberration to be managed out of the system?

A glimpse into the life of the lead Fauvist, the great French artist Henri Matisse, provides some perspective on the mental anguish suffered by so many great innovators. In 1909, when Matisse visited an artists' café in Montparnasse, Paris, to have a drink with Picasso, neither Picasso nor anyone in his party would speak to him. Sitting at a table alone and unacknowledged in a room full of other artists was humiliating confirmation of his outcast status. "All my life I've been in quarantine", said Matisse, on recalling the scene. In 1910 he moved to Spain where, following a betrayal by an associate, he suffered a nervous breakdown. As Spurling writes in his biography: "He had been living on clenched nerves for so long that they could not be unwound." On his first night in Madrid he failed to sleep. "From then on insomnia exacerbated his inner turmoil. He had not slept for more than a week by the time he reached Seville in a state of near collapse." Following a spate of bad weather, he fell ill and remained indoors. His doctor prescribed rest, tranquillisers and warm baths three times daily. "Matisse owed much to this shrewd and sensitive Spanish doctor, who explained that there was nothing clinically wrong with him, that black despair would inevitably follow bouts of such intense nervous pressure and emotional exhilaration, and that all he could do was learn to manage his condition by sticking to a regular work schedule, and by being less exacting towards himself." Writing later to his wife, he observed of his emotional fragility: "All artists have this particular make-up, that's what makes them artists, but with me it's a bit excessive...perhaps that's what gives their quality to my pictures."[9]

The life of the Post-Impressionist Van Gogh was also saturated with madness. Born in 1853, at the relatively late age of 27 he embarked on a career as a self-taught artist. He lived for just another 10 years, producing - with increasingly velocity - more than 2000 works, including some 900 paintings. It is believed that, during his lifetime, he was unable to sell any of his works, relying almost solely on the financial support of his brother, Theo. In the latter period of his life, Van Gogh was particularly afflicted by mental problems. It is widely conjectured that the extent of his condition was critical to his development as an artist. In 1890, having suffered repeated bouts of depression, he is reputed to have shot himself in the chest with a revolver. A recent biography has, however, disputed this account, suggesting instead that a truant teenager goaded him into a shooting accident. Since his death, more than 150 psychiatrists have attempted to label his mental condition, delivering more than 30 different diagnoses, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and syphilis. All of these would have been compounded by his fondness for absinthe, coupled with overwork, malnutrition and insomnia.

In the light of the achievements of such artists, a gathering body of research has begun to explore the correlation between creative achievement and mental health.

While a cursory examination of the lives of people such as Einstein, Van Gogh and '70s composer, record producer and recording artist Phil Spector suggests little in common, they and many other gifted achievers have suffered from varying degrees of mental instability. And as Styron put it in Darkness Visible: "Never let it he doubted that depression, in its extreme form, is madness."[10] One of the most acute descriptions of depression comes from Jarvis Cocker, front man of the British pop group Pulp. Cocker, who was bullied at school, said: "When I speak of depression I speak of a clinical depression that is the background of your entire life, a background of anguish and anxiety, a sense that nothing goes well, that pleasure is unavailable and all your strategies collapse."[11]

The twinning of madness and levels of artistic genius has increasingly led to a view that the common traits of psychotic behaviour might be the very enablers of those alternate views of reality necessary to spawn creativity. Certainly, someone with a melancholy disposition is fated with a poisoned chalice. But, as Romantic poet Lord Byron put it, also with a "fearful gift". The underpinning theory that explains this fearful gift suggests a continuum between the mentally healthy and mentally unstable - and that in many instances "creative types" are able to explore innovative ideas while suffering mental illness, though without (some of) the incapacitating symptoms often associated with that condition.

Quoting Byron's description of the spurned angel Lucifer, in his novel Disgrace, J.M. Coetzee might well have been describing the solitary outcast artist, touched by madness:

> He stood a stranger in this breathing world,
> An erring spirit from another hurled;
> A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped
> By choice the perils he by chance escaped.[12]

Quoting another line from Byron's poem, "His madness was not of the head but heart," Coetzee's university-lecturer protagonist, David Lurie, observes that we are not asked to condemn "this being with a mad heart, this being with whom there is something constitutionally wrong". He continues: "On the contrary, we are invited to understand and sympathize. But there is a limit to sympathy. For though he lives among us, he is not one of us. He is exactly what he calls himself: a thing, that is, a monster. Finally, Byron will suggest, it will not be possible to love him, not in the deeper, more human sense of the world. He will he condemned to solitude."

While Coetzee's Lurie is, in part, referring to his own wayward and loveless disposition, a wider reading suggests that he is also alluding to an aspect of Byron's human nature: mental fragility, instability and madness.

Scientific research suggests that the genetic make-up that shapes the condition of mental illness is carried down countless generations over tens of thousands years. Evolutionary psychology intriguingly suggests that these traits must haw carried with them some positive social benefit. If not, through the process of natural selection, these traits would have long been weeded out of the species. From this we can conjecture that the emotional problems often associated with creativity cannot be wholly malevolent; there must be some benefit. Anxiety, from which so many suffer, is one such trait commonly associated with mental instability and yet in measured doses, it enables a beneficial alertness and clarity of mind. The quest is therefore to find the appropriate dosage.

Gordon Claridge, Emeritus Professor of Abnormal Psychology at Oxford University, notes: "While people accept that there are health benefits to anxiety they are more wary of schizophrenia and manic depression." Claridge recently edited a special edition of the journal Personality and Individual Differences, which focused specifically on the connection between creativity and mental illness. "It can be difficult for people to reconcile mental illness with the idea of traits that may not be disabling," he said. "There is now a feeling that these traits have survived because they have some adaptive value. To be mildly manic depressive or mildly schizophrenic brings a flexibility of thought, an openness, and risk-taking behaviour, which does have some adaptive value in creativity. The price paid for having those traits is that some will have mental illness." The psychologist and academic Kay Redfield Jamison supports this view: "There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that, compared to 'normal' individuals, artists, writers, and creative people in general, are both psychologically 'sicker' - that is, they score higher on a wide variety of measures of psychopathology- and are psychologically healthier (for example, they show quite elevated scores on measures of self-confidence and ego-strength)."[13]

Worth noting here is that risk-taking behaviour commonly associated with entrepreneurs is not deemed common to most of society, which is generally conservative, pattern following and unlikely to deviate from the norm. Herd behaviour is generally observed, hence the counter construct of the innovative "outsider" achieving on the periphery, as identified earlier.

The notion that creative individuals are more likely to have traits of mental illness is supported by numerous historical examples. In the 19th century, luminaries such as poet Emily Dickinson, evolutionist Charles Darwin, military general William T. Sherman and statesmen Benjamin Disraeli, Abraham Lincoln and, in the 20th

century, Winston Churchill, are all known to have suffered from mood disorders. In an article on how genius embraces the gift of madness, British journalist Roger Dobson cites a study that examined the incidence of mood disorders, suicides and institutionalisation of British and Irish poets between 1600 and 1800. Over this period the reported incidence was 20 times higher than that of "normal" individuals. Dobson notes that other studies have demonstrated how psychiatric patients perform better in tests of abstract thinking.[14] In another piece of research focused on the lives of 291 distinguished and innovative men from various fields, it was established that 69 per cent suffered from some form of mental illness.

Writing in the same journal as Claridge, experimental psychologist Emilie Glazer states: "Most theorists agree that it is not the full-blown illness itself, but milder forms of psychosis that are at the root of the association between creativity and madness...The underlying traits linked with mild psychopathology enhance creative ability. In severe form, they are debilitating."

A further strand of research suggests a correlation between the various traits of mental illness and different types of consequent creativity. For example, the creativity required to develop a mathematical theory of prime numbers is starkly different from that required to produce a piece of complex jazz or abstract art. Here three possible forms of illness have been identified as responsible for various creative outputs: (1) schizophrenia and schizophrenic traits, (2) bipolar disorder (or cyclothymic traits), and (3) traits associated with autism and Asperger's disorders. Dobson reports on a study that found important differences between artistically creative people and mathematicians: typically artists present with schizotypal traits associated with psychosis, while, by contrast, mathematicians, who commonly deal with detail, usually present with traits associated with autism. "Affective disorder perpetuates creativity limited to the normal," says Glazer, "while the schizoid person is predisposed to a sense of detachment from the world, free from social boundaries and able to consider alternative frameworks, producing creativity within the revolutionary sphere." It is this detachment from boundaries that enables revolutionary insights and the creation of new paradigms.

This form of creativity is no mere incrementalism; it is the generation of alternate realities. So, at a certain level, new mathematical insights are more likely to reveal themselves to the schizophrenic disposition. As Glazer observes: "Newton and Einstein's schizotypal orientation, for instance, enabled their revolutionary stamp in the sciences."

The Nobel Prize-winning mathematician and economist John Nash also suffered from paranoid schizophrenia. His sister remembered that, as a child "Johnny was always different. [My parents] knew he was different. And they knew he was

bright. He always wanted to do things his way. Mother insisted I do things for him, that I include him in my friendships...But I wasn't too keen on showing off my somewhat, odd brother".[15] Such was his brightness that, in 1948, Nash's then academic advisor wrote in a letter to support his application to study maths at Princeton: "This man is a mathematical genius."[16] On submitting a 28-page dissertation on non-cooperative games, he was awarded a PhD from that university, the institution where he was based for the rest of his academic life. The dissertation itself led to the publication of four journal articles. Over the 54 years stretching from 1942 to 1996, he would publish 23 scientific studies. At the age of 31, two years into his marriage with Alicia de Lardé, Nash was involuntarily admitted to a mental hospital where he was diagnosed with clinical depression and paranoid schizophrenia. Over the next 11 years he would be in and out of psychiatric hospitals where he received antipsychotic medication and shock therapy. In subsequent interviews, Nash suggested that his delusional thinking over this period was related to his general despondency and struggle for academic recognition. In a PBS interview entitled "Downward Spiral", he expressed the view that, if not for the pressures of academia, he would have thought "more normally". "If I felt completely pressureless I don't think l would have gone into this pattern,'" he said. In 1992 aspects of Nash's life were dramatised in the eight-times Oscar-nominate movie A Beautiful Mind. Nash was killed in a car accident in 2015.

Similar to Nash, the 20th-century surrealist artist Salvador Dalí was severely disturbed. His behaviour was at times paranoid, antisocial, histrionic and narcissistic in aggregate, he presented traits found in people with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. But these aspects were all fundamental to his contribution as an artist. In the absence of any of these traits of mental illness, it is unlikely that he would have made as profound an artistic contribution as he did.

In addition to being diagnosed with bipolar disorder, Phil Spector has some of the other common traits of creative genius: he was bullied as a child, was an outsider at school and his father died when he was nine. Famous for his collaborations with the Righteous Brothers, The Beatles, John Lennon post Beatles, Leonard Cohen and the Ramones, the reclusive and erratic Spector was inducted into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in 1989. His lunatic binges having been well documented, Spector was found guilty of shooting a struggling actress during a psychotic episode and, in May 2009, was sentenced to 19 years in prison.

Looking back on the first decade of his career, '70s folk singer-songwriter James Taylor recently spoke about his period of self-medication. Taylor committed himself to a mental institution when he was just 17 and again later in his early twenties, when he signed in to the Austen Riggs psychiatric hospital, a place where he

would pen - among other songs off Sweet Baby James - the haunting “Fire and Rain”. Painfully shy on stage, Taylor became addicted to heroin and struggled for years thereafter to stay clean. Said Taylor: “The study of addiction is very interesting to me, and I did survive my own period of abuse, and it did serve me in a way. I think that there are some people who perhaps drink to get blasted; who are really looking for oblivion. But most people who are addicts are self-medicating; they're just trying to feel normal, really. The drugs that are available - the pharmaceuticals - are getting better and better at treating the human condition.” Reflecting on his personal battles with heroin addiction, Taylor added: “It's dangerous to recommend it.”[17] Bruce Springsteen is less emphatic on the use of stimulants, “We all need help somewhere along the way to relieve us of our daily burdens,” he said. “It's why intoxicants have been pursued since the beginning of time. Today I'd simply advise you to choose your methods and materials carefully or not at all, depending upon one's tolerance, and watch the body parts!”[18]

Comedians, too, have a history of emotional fragility and are commonly prone to depression. Those who have acknowledged severe bouts of depression include Dudley Moore, Robin Williams, Tony Hancock, John Cleese, Spike Milligan, Stephen Fry and Paul Merton. Why the stark contrast? Rod Martin, author of The Psychology of Humor -An Integrative Approach, believes that humour is developed as a coping mechanism in response to depression. Martin cites a study of 69 successful comedians, which found that they were, typically, of superior intelligence, angry, suspicious and depressed. On top of this, their earlier lives were marked by suffering, isolation and feelings of deprivation.[19] While suicide is not the logical conclusion of mental disorders, it seems clear that many gifted artists are prone to depression and bipolar disorders. Anyone wishing to further explore the topic should consider two books by Kay Redfield Jamison: Night Falls Fast and Touched with Fire.[20]

While erratic behaviour is relatively common among artists, it also occurs among business achievers. Well-known examples include Sol Kerzner and Steve Jobs, the latter probably the best-known business entrepreneur to have exhibited instances of instability. The reasons are not difficult to fathom. As a young teenager Jobs quickly worked out that he was brighter than his parents and this, along with the knowledge that he was adopted, served to distance him from his family and those around him.[21] In 1972, during the week leading up to his high school graduation, the young Jobs refused to acknowledge the supportive role of his adoptive parents, who had driven in especially for the big day. While he later expressed regret over the incident, at the time he preferred that no one knew of his parents but rather that people around him saw him as some kind of hobo-orphan who thumbed lifts across the country, arriving out of nowhere, with no obvious past or set of connections.[22]

(This inclination paralleled Jobs' hero, Bob Dylan who, as a young songwriter still on the make, preferred to be seen as a homeless Guthrie-type troubadour rather than as someone from a stable Jewish family out in the conservative Midwest.)[23]

Jobs' early capacity for creating fiction speaks also to his subsequent manipulation of truth during his reign at Apple. This distortive capacity, where flights of fancy saw objective truth discarded, became euphemistically known as his "reality distortion field". According to Andy Hertzfeld, one of his co-workers on the Macintosh team in 1984, this distortion field remained socially potent even when those around him knew he was operating in it. Stratagems aimed to neutralise his truth distortion were widely discussed by those on his team, but to little effect. Most good-naturedly acquiesced to it, seeing there was little they could do to change it.[24] Some, however believed his distortions were delusional, and amounted to lies, where he would present a story as fact without the slightest consideration of the actual truth as everyone knew it to be.

His stubborn resistance to reality was often at the expense of himself, where he would contrive a convincing self-exterior in order to bluff others into accepting his agenda. He was, in this way, like Nathan, the paranoid schizophrenic in Willian Styron's Sophie's Choice, convincing Stingo and Sophie that his madcap laboratory work was for real; that he was always on the verge of a massive breakthrough. Of course none of this was true. Importantly, and in contrast to Nathan, Jobs did make breakthroughs, such were the powers of his conviction and persuasion. An example often cited is Jobs convincing his partner, Steve Wozniak, to design the Breakout game within the space of just a few days: a vision no one believed could be achieved until, under Jobs' manic cajolery, it was.[25] Debi Coleman, another member of the early Mac team, fell under the same spell, saying that his distortions became self-fulfilling prophesies, with you as his subject: doing the impossible because you were led to believe that, actually, it was possible.[26] The 60-second signature Apple ad "Think Different", drafted by Lee Clow of the Chiat/Day ad agency, is resonant here. Almost directly referencing Jobs and his reality distortion effect, it ran: "Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do." Reported to have produced some of this copy himself, Jobs subsequently admitted to having wept each time he reconnected with this piece.[27]

An additional and interconnecting component of the Jobs personality profile was his unnerving abrasiveness. This aspect surfaced early. In pre-Apple 1974, isolated to night shifts at the Atari factory because of his unsociable rudeness, the youthful Jobs continued to rile fellow workers, calling them “dumb shits”, an opinion from which he never backed down. In fact, the only reason why he shone there was that everyone else was so bad, he self-righteously opined.[28] By 1977 Jobs was head of Apple and becoming increasingly despotic, denigrating underling engineers with their designs that looked “like shit”. One of these programmers, Randy Wigginton, recalled how Jobs would breeze in, quickly check out what he'd been doing and then inform him that it was shit - this without any notion of what it was or why it had been produced. During this same period, he would insult waitresses at local restaurants, sending untouched plates of food back to the kitchen because he said the servings were “garbage”.[29] In his pitch to Bob Belleville to join Apple, Jobs offered that everything he'd ever done was “shit”, so why didn't he come and work for Jobs instead? So persuasive was the Jobs reality distortion that Belleville complied and joined up.[30] Complaining by memo to the Apple board in 1981, senior underling Jef Raskin wrote that, while he’d always liked the man, Jobs was, in truth, a dreadful manager and impossible to work for. His capacity for missing appointments was legendary and, when present, he was reactive and thoughtless, seldom giving credit when required. When told of a new idea, he'd immediately attack it, slating it as a stupid, useless waste of time and energy. If, by some miracle, the idea was a good one, he'd instantly claim it as his own.[31] John Sculley, a successful Pepsi-Cola president from 1977 to 1983, who was later hired to manage Apple and its mercurial founder, subsequently came to the view that Jobs was mildly bipolar, with big mood swings -wildly ecstatic one minute, darkly depressed the next. Regularly, Sculley would be required to placate a seething Jobs who’d exploded over some perceived design infraction. Twenty minutes later, he'd receive another call that Jobs was losing the plot, again.[32]

Andy Cunningham, his publicist in 1985, tells a story about when the cranky Jobs was in New York preparing for a series of one-on-one interviews with the press. Nothing was right in the set-up. They were the wrong sort of strawberries, so were the flowers, and the piano was in the wrong place. When Cunningham tried to mollify her boss he turned on her, criticising the outfit she was wearing. Conditioned to his bouts of roiling, unfocused anger, she tried to pacify him, saying that she understood his distress. “You have no fucking idea how I feel ... no fucking idea what it's like to be me,” he is reported to have retorted. [33]

Apple's key designer, Sir Jony Ive, worked closely with Jobs yet still did not understand the man. “He's a very, very sensitive guy. That's one of the things that makes his antisocial behavior, his rudeness, so unconscionable,” said Ive. “I once

asked him why he gets so mad about stuff. He said, 'But I don't stay mad.' He has this very childish ability to get really worked up about something, and it doesn't stay with him at all. But there are other times, I think honestly, when he's very frustrated, and his way to achieve catharsis is to hurt somebody. And I think he feels that he has a liberty and a license to do that. The normal rules of social engagement, he feels, don't apply to him. Because of how very sensitive he is, he knows exactly how to efficiently and effectively hurt someone. And he does do that."[34] One would imagine that this level of psycho behaviour would simply not be tolerated in business, but it is. In 2010 Jobs was named the Fortune CEO of the Decade. It will take a serious reappraisal to knock Jobs off his pedestal.

Another well-known business personality who fits fairly comfortably within the Jobs mould is the South African-born casino and hotel sultan, Sol Kerzner. Kerzner's quixotic disposition demonstrates incredible levels of both emotional resilience and fragility. Arguably these two qualities are simply two sides of the same coin and, like Jobs, Kerzner exhibits tendencies of dogged determination and unrestrained bouts of mental anguish. He is an absolute perfectionist, and has described himself as "driven aggressive, obsessive and addictive". Born in 1935 to Russian immigrants who had arrived in South Africa six years earlier, Kerzner was the youngest of four children. His parents had little or no money and he was raised in the poor Johannesburg suburb of Doornfontein. While he was studying to be a chartered accountant, his parents moved to coastal Durban, where they ran a small kosher boarding house. There the young Kerzner honed his initial understanding of the hotel industry. In 1963 he raised sufficient capital to build the first of his Sun International luxury hotels at Umhlanga Rocks, north of the city. By 1983 the chain would contain 31 such hotels. The biggest break came in 1979 when, controversially, he obtained exclusive gambling rights in the apartheid homeland of Bophuthatswana, two hours' drive north-west of Johannesburg. This enabled the building of Sun City and, in 1992, the Lost City.

Many see Kerzner as a contemporary Napoleon - abrasive, controlling, compulsive and insecure. Over time, and with varying degrees of success, Kerzner appears to have learnt to control his compulsive behaviour. Smoking 60 cigarettes a day, in 1989 he suffered a serious heart attack at the age of 54. At the time, he was told to quit smoking and to cut back on the booze and his 20 cups of coffee per day. He later confided to the London Evening Standard: "My cardiologist said no cigarettes and three drinks maximum... I swapped my cigarettes for worry beads but he didn't say how large each drink should be. I still get through half a bottle of Scotch in a night maybe more, very easily." In 2005, Kerzner told Graham Boynton of The Telegraph, UK, that for years he never considered himself an alcoholic because he

“didn't wake up in the morning desperate for a drink”, but through a spell at the Betty Ford Clinic had come to understand his workaholic behaviour and addictive personality. He has, subsequently, been off the booze and seemingly better off without it.[35]

The Guardian's Emma Brockes was of the opinion that he has “a reputation for great charm, interspersed with outbursts of temper”. He is a man who suffers no delusions of human frailty. Commenting on the recently opened One & Only Hotel in Cape Town he said: “It's arguably the best. I don't want to boast and I'm not knocking SA hotels considering I built a lot of them in the ‘70s, but this [hotel]...by global standards there's nothing like it.” So driven is Kerzner and his standards so exacting that a former business associate told a British newspaper that he once witnessed Kerzner force an employee to paint a wall seven times before he got it the correct shade of green. “He wants things just right. And he never fails. Never.”

In 2007, Chris Brammer, who spent a decade working for Kerzner as a general manager, told the Financial Times that Kerzner was “not an empathic person”. He recalled that after “a very fine lunch” next to the pool at Sun City, his boss asked how his lunch was. When Brammer replied, “Very nice,” Kerzner snarled, “The hot dishes were shit, the desserts were shit, the people responsible for the lunch are shit.”

By way of justification, in 1993 Kerzner defended his style of management, telling the Sunday Times: “It's not a question of whether you're Mr Nice Guy or not. The key to success is setting your objectives. I like to think of myself as a perfectionist. Unquestionably I set high standards and I recognise and appreciate people who are able to meet my expectations. The fact that I don't easily tolerate substandard performances I don't see as a shortcoming.”[36]

Emotional maturity

> The essence of a work of art is not to be found in the personal idiosyncrasies that creep into it - indeed, the more there are of them, the less it is a work of art - hut in its rising above the personal and speaking from the mind and heart of the artist to the heart and mind of mankind. The personal aspect of art is a limitation and even a vice. Art that is only personal, or predominately so, deserves to be treated as neurosis.
>
> CARL JUNG[37]

> After first contact knocks you on your ass, you'd better have a plan, for some preparedness and personal development will he required if you expect to hang around any longer than your fifteen minutes.
>
> BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN[38]

While creative output may initially be pinned to a troubled spirit, if it is to endure the artist needs to grow up. Some level of self-awareness or self-mastery is required - why he or she acts or feels in a particular way. This is something we might call emotional maturity.

Let's back up here. What I'm saying is that much creativity comes from the surge of energy catalysed by early experiences of pain and thwarted attempts to be loved and to have one's primary needs met. This is why Rob Lowe can say, for example, that as a young man his acting career kick-started when he found he could connect with the sources of audience affirmation that he could not ordinarily have found at home. Bearing in mind the observation Piers Morgan made during his CNN interview with Lowe - that many creative people never received the explicit declarations of love from their parents they so desperately craved[39] - the consequence, it seems, is often a star that burns brightly, fuelled by the primal desire for acceptance and affirmation. We all know stars like this: who fired up on this initial quest but never moved on from there. Many stagnated, became caricatures. They could not move on and grow up. Some drank themselves to death. Some did drugs. All sought some form of external dependence, addicted to that which was going to make it okay. “I think that is the ultimate tragedy of fame...People who are simply out of control, who are lost,” observed George Michael of this phenomenon, somewhat presciently, in 1990.[40] So rather than growing up, many such artists have remained simply where they are. Sometimes they are forced to by an art industry that requires them to be the persona that fans adore, and to keep producing more of the same indefinitely. Some refuse. Neil Young and his “unrepresentative” albums spring to mind here, along with the post-Top 20 Talk Talk, Bruce Springsteen (prior to Darkness on the Edge of Town) and, in the post-Beatles era, John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

Steely Dan’s Donald Fagen is also an artist who became victim to his pathologies and then grew up and moved on. Via a number of sources, he has revealed something of the relationship between his creative ability as a songwriter and the state of his inner life. During the ‘70s Steely Dan had become one of the greatest selling jazz-rock- pop outfits in the US, putting out seven critically acclaimed albums in the eight years from 1973 to I 980. Together with his songwriting partner, Walter Becker, “The Dan”, it seemed, could do no wrong. And then, suddenly, Fagen lost his mojo and everything went wrong. Upon his break-up of the group, post Gaucho (1980), Fagen put out his solo set, The Nightfly (1982), a compilation of songs inspired by his life as a reclusive teenager growing up in the suburbs, listening to doo-wop radio. In the decade following The Nightfly, however, Fagen suffered from severe depression and writer's block. Later, according to Steely Dan biographer Brian Sweet, Fagen observed that his inability to produce was driven internally and not because of the

musical failings of any external parties. He could not produce anything of merit and he feared that perhaps his facility for songwriting would never return. As a big fan of mega-'60s and '70s songwriter Burt Bacharach, who had penned many of the Carpenters' hits, Fagen had watched Bacharach suffer such a fate. "He had this couple of years of incredible inspiration. That's what most artists have, just a couple of years. You're very lucky if you have them, and very lucky if you can maintain such standards. There are only a few people, great artists, who work until they die. Stravinsky or Vladimir Nabokov,"[41] said Fagen. Facing the void, Fagen warned his record company, Warner Brothers, to back off and not impose any deadlines. They had little choice. Neither did his fans. I still recall my delight, as a student, at discovering and savouring the earlier Steely Dan albums - and perplexedly trying to figure out when the next album would arrive. It would take a while.

Finally mixed in February 1993, the Kamakiriad album marked the end of an 11-year hiatus for Fagen. Later, trying to put the pieces together, he attributed his writer's block to his "extreme idealism", a euphemism, perhaps, for a form of Type-A controlling behaviour that marked his entire musical life and ultimately forced him to seek psychological help.[42] For Fagen - one of the sharpest knives in the box - the critical insight was that, in the early days of success, music and the camaraderie of musicians had offered him the perfection, sense of control and peace of mind that aspects of his earlier personal life had not. Reflecting on this, he observed that people from his generation had been forced to create alternate families because their biological families so often failed to provide the requisite emotional support. Fagen's substitution of musical family for biological family as a base from which he could reiteratively reconstruct himself would prove a critical one. Forsaking old family ties, he increasingly came to rely on his music to sustain him emotionally. And then, in his mid-thirties, at the apparent height of his musical powers, Fagen reached a place in himself where music could no longer provide the succour and support on which he depended. At this point, despite all his commercial success and love for the music he was making, the demons of his childhood powerfully began to reassert themselves. Fagen was now a burnt-out workaholic, at one point even trying to force the recording engineers on Gaucho to work on Christmas day to help him alleviate the "boredom" he suffered when doing nothing. Later, Fagen could see just how ridiculous and neurotic his behaviour had become. "That album is almost a document of despair. We were running out of steam as far as our youthful energy was concerned and we weren't mature enough to deal with it. We were still adolescents."[43] Continued Fagen: "I think a lot of it had to do with not wanting to address certain things I had to address personally, and working gave me the chance not to do any kind of self-examination. I'm a very introspective kind of person as it is, so I like the action of always working,

it's a kind of therapy in itself. I'm basically someone who has to fight nervousness and depression."[44]

The conclusion of Gaucho marked the end of Fagen's optimism and faith in the belief that his musical creativity could stave off the darkness inside. "I was part of a generation that believes you can reinvent yourself at will; start from scratch and detach yourself from the past that had bad faith in it and lots of values that weren't valuable," he would later say. "I really did try to invent myself according to the spirit of the times. And one of the things you learn as you grow older is that there is no escape. I don't know what it was inventing but whatever it was, it wasn't what my parents had expected of me. That was my addiction. The Fifties were so repressed they were a recipe for insanity."[45]

This new realisation would prove Fagen's creative undoing. Stripped of his art he would be required, finally, to face down his demons alone. Trying to explain the emotional turmoil of the 10 years that followed Gaucho, Fagen scripted his mythological searching through a series of life-narrative sub-plots that linked both the songs and main character of the Kamakiriad album. In an autobiographical interview given around the time of its release, Fagen described the album's protagonist-hero as "kind of a fuck-up, but with excellent intentions".[46] Qualifying this, he noted that "most people start out rather optimistic about their life. They fall in love, they idealise their partner, and it doesn't work out so well. The main character on the album goes through a series of losses ending [as in the song] 'On the Dunes' where he is totally abandoned and despondent, even suicidal." Fagen admitted that the album story was really an alternate take on his own life. "In Steely Dan," he observed, "we were very arrogant kids and when life starts to kick you around, you have to swallow your pride... By the end of making Gaucho I think both Walter [Becker] and I were down and depressed and both of us really had to make changes."

So the changes came, most especially in the form of psychotherapy aimed at addressing the personal problems that beset Fagen. As he would later admit: "I've experienced numb periods in my life, for sure. I'm an emotional person and I think that for that reason maybe I'm a little guarded. I feel a lot happier now, but I still keep my therapist busy."[47] With time and counsel, Fagen appears to have grown up, seeming somewhat less driven, spending portions of the early new millennium touring with Becker. Their Grammy-winning 2000 album Two Against Nature, and the DVD that followed, bear testimony to a more laid-back, yet still acerbic, Fagen. In more recent years he has teamed up with Michael McDonald and Boz Scaggs to form the touring "super-anti-group", The Dukes of September. In 2013 he published Eminent Hipsters, a book of short essays and musings revealing a cranky, restless Fagen still aware of his own unresolved issues. The final piece of Hipsters is drawn from a series

of journal entries while on tour with the Dukes. An entry from 20 June 2012 is possibly the most revealing: “By the way, I'm not posting this journal on the internet. Why should I let you lazy, spoiled TV Babies read it for nothing in the same way you downloaded all those songs my partner and I sacrificed our entire youth to write and record, not to mention the miserable, friendless childhoods we endured that left us with lifelong feelings of shame and self-reproach we were forced to countervail with a fragile grandiosity and a need to constantly prove our self-worth - in short, with the sort of personality disorders that ultimately turned us into performing monkeys?”[48] The man is a work in progress to be sure.

Like Fagen, Bruce Springsteen was equally poisoned by the strictures of his past. Constantly at odds with his father, who smoked and drank excessively, Springsteen, while still an adolescent, became a control freak, eschewing the laid-back, narcotic excesses of the hippie generation around him in favour of manic self and team micromanagement.[49] In the early years on tour with his E Street Band he played the proverbial Scout Master. No one dared to let Springsteen think they were messing with narcotics lest their commitment to the music be called into question. Road manager Bobby Chirmside relates a situation that occurred in 1978: he and Springsteen dropped by the band’s dressing room to find the boys getting high, with one guy holding up a cocaine spoon to the nose of another. Seeing the Boss, they awkwardly offered some to the bristling Springsteen who turned on the ice. “If. I. Ever. Fucking. See. This. Again. I don't Care who it is. They're gone. On the spot. I'll fire them,” he reportedly hissed. His girlfriend at the time, Joyce Hyser, subsequently confirmed that she'd never seem him toking on a joint; not even a cigarette.[50] Decades later, a reflective Springsteen observed that if you're sufficiently immature and emotionally damaged, becoming a fastidious, Type-A workaholic can be a far easier short-term option than doing the hard yards to directly face clown your demons. Much in line with the martinet Donald Fagen during his Gaucho period, Springsteen has since accepted the crazy flaw to this approach. “It was the only way I knew how to work,” admitted the Boss. “It was fun, but it was exhausting. I think intentionally exhausting.”[51]

In the spring of 1987 matters came to a head when Springsteen separated from his wife, Julianne Phillips, and hooked up with back-up vocalist Patti Scialfa, who joined the E Street Band on the 1988 tour celebrating his subsequent album, Tunnel of Love. The music from this and the following albums bear testimony to Springsteen's inner turmoil and battles for integrity in a slippery world. Chronically aware of his own failures, he said of this time: “crashed into myself and saw a lot of myself as I really was. I questioned all my motivations. Why am I writing, what I'm writing? Why am I saying what I'm saying? Am I bullshitting? Am I just trying to be the most popular

guy in town? I questioned everything I'd ever done and it was good."[52] In his recent autobiography, Born to Run, Springsteen adds this view on the continual struggle with self: "In all psychological wars, it's never over, there's just this day, this time, and a hesitant belief in your own ability to change. It is not an arena where the unsure should go looking for absolutes and there are no permanent victories. It's about a living change, filled with insecurities, the chaos of our personalities, and is always one step up, two steps back."[53]

Perhaps a lighter version of the Fagen/Springsteen prototype is Neil Young, the '70s folk hero who famously acknowledged that he'd never penned a song not stoned.[54] Asked in 2012 if he was a good recording artist to work for, he replied: "Sometimes it's better not to blow up at someone. I can save that anger and emotion for my guitar playing." By way of an afterthought, he offered this too: "The fact is that I can be really irritable when I'm unhappy about stuff ... I can be a nitpicker about details that seem to be over the top. But then again I'm into what I'm into, so a lot of people forgive me because of that."[55] Joe Walsh, the West Coast guitarist and Eagles bad-boy of too many trashed hotel rooms to mention, talks in a similar vein of his work with the group in the period covering Hotel California: "In the press and media it was presented that we were constantly at war. And I can't say that's exactly the case. We were interacting and we were all intense. Glenn [Frey] said to me one time: 'I get nuts sometimes and I'm sorry.' But that tension had a lot to do with fanning the artistic fire. Having that dynamic was important in making the music."[56]

Drugs and drinking

Artists who either failed to work through their issues or did not quit drinking or taking drugs (or both) are not hard to find. The tragedy is that most of them are dead. In truth, it seems all too often that artists who struggle with depression and melancholy end up as addicts who cannot come back from the brink. Famously, the list includes singers Elvis Presley, Brian Jones, Jim Morrison, Janis Joplin, Nick Drake, Tim Buckley, Sid Vicious and, more recently, Amy Winehouse and Prince. All these artists died hard and before their time, mostly as addicts of some type. Jazz pianist Bill Evans also falls within this caste. Though 51 when declared dead in 1980, Evans had become addicted to heroin, followed by cocaine, 20 years earlier. According to jazz critic Gene Lees, one of his admirers, "It was the longest suicide in history."[57]

So why did he succumb? Certainly one of the reasons was his father, who drank heavily to cope with the financial strain of the Depression. Another was the influence of the '40s jazz giants, many of whom maintained a schedule of hard drugs, especially heroin, to sustain their hard-living, glamorous profession. The legendary jazzman

Charlie Parker was a user of note and his endorsement appeared to spur others on. Certainly this applied to Evans who, at the time, was just developing his precocious, adolescent talent for jazz. (The Rolling Stones' Keith Richards also confessed to having been introduced to smack while on the road performing with black Blues artists from the '60s.) Later, in the army, Evans is reported to have indulged in marijuana despite warnings that it would interfere with his recall ability. It was, however, not until his connection with Miles Davis, his band and their culture of heroin use that Evans crossed over to convert his experimentation with heroin to a habit. Ever the uber-cool but only white performer in the Davis set-up, Evans was determined to fit in with the spiked-up jazz fellowship. Soon he was the worst junkie in the band. Eliot Zigmund, who drummed with Evans on albums such as the great You Must Believe in Spring, suggests that Evans took to drugs as a transformative, to get away from the fact that he was just a regular American guy. In shades of Jobs and Dylan, Evans appeared to cast off his conservative upbringing in an attempt to find his groove. "I think the drugs for him made him more mysterious, or got him to a more mysterious place, got him out of his background,"[58] offered Peri Cousins, Evans' ex-lover and inspiration for "Peri's Scope", adding that she believed his addiction was self-destructive. "He knew what he was doing and part of him felt that was something he had to do and that when he was finished he'd stop. I suppose lots of people felt that way...I have a theory about his addiction. When he came down, when he kicked it, which he did on numerous occasions, the world was - I don't know how to say - too beautiful. It was too sharp for him. It's almost as if he had to blur the world for himself by being strung out. I had that impression all the time."[59]

By 1962, according to Gene Lees, his personal and musical life was "in hideous disarray".[60] Following the death of his inspirational lead double bassist, Scott LaFaro, the year before, Evans was barely going through the motions and was in deep trouble, cutting a series of uninspired albums merely to finance his steepening narcotic dependency. In the four months after April that year he had recorded in three separate studios on eight different dates for the output of four-and-a-half albums.[61] Following threats from loan sharks to break his fingers during the Interplay sessions that July, Evans was playing hard for all the cash he could get.[62] By January 1963, he'd paralysed his right arm with a needlestick injury and spent a week at New York's famous jazz club the Village Vanguard playing only with his left hand. His bassist at the time, Bill Crow, recalled how "with his left hand and some virtuoso peddling, he was able to maintain harmonic interest in support of treble lines. In morbid fascination, pianists dropped by to witness this phenomenon. He would dangle the dead right hand over the keyboard and drop his forefinger on the keys, using the weight of his hand to depress them. Everything else was played with the left hand, and

if you looked away, you couldn't tell anything was wrong."[63] Things did not get better. By the end of that year, as a result of the needlestick, the outer two fingers on his right hand had lost all feeling and control. Booked at the time for a two-week gig at Boston's Jazz Workshop, he continued to play with apparent flawlessness: one session in front of a certain teenaged piano prodigy, Keith Jarrett, then on one of his first tours as a professional muso.[64]

Between these periods of oblivion, there were spells during which Evans would attempt to kick the habit, returning south to his parents' home in Florida to gain weight and isolate himself from the band friends and place cues that continued to provoke the relapses that beset him. Suffering for most of his life from addiction and hepatitis (common for users of shared needles), his pithy analysis of the tune "Suicide is Painless", from the Vietnam War-based TV series M*A*S*H, drew wry smiles from those in the know. "Debatable," he offered, with little apparent irony.[65]

Alcohol is of course the other great and fatal distraction of so many talented artists, including writers. It is known to alter one's creative perspectives, introducing, as Charles Bukowski asserted, new insights, yanking and joggling you "out of the routine thought of everydayism". Kingsley Amis suggested a glass at close of play. But those in the habit find this hard to put into practice. Jack London started initially by rewarding himself with a drink once halfway through his daily quota of 1000 words. Soon, however, he was drinking before the writing commenced. And so it was with many other famous writers: Scott Fitzgerald – "Too much champagne is just right"; Dorothy Parker – "I'd rather have a glass in front of me than a frontal lobotomy"; William Faulkner – "I usually write at night. I always keep my whisky within reach"; and of course Hemingway – "Write drunk, edit sober".[66]

To wit, Hemingway, who had been drinking since the age of 15, claimed that few things gave him more pleasure than liquor. "When you work hard all day with your head and know you must work again the next day, what else can change your ideas and make them run on a different plane like whiskey? When you are cold and wet, what else can warm you? Before an attack who can say anything that gives you the momentary well-being that rum does?"[67]

In due course, however, Hemingway's wellbeing was replaced by a series of disasters fuelled by his alcoholism. One night in 1928, well in the bag, he confused the skylight cord and the lavatory chain, yanking the entire glass fixture down onto his head, causing concussion and requiring nine stitches. This was just the start. In a series of harebrained moments of severe intoxication, he shot himself in the leg (1935), broke a toe while kicking at a gate lock (1938), smashed his foot through a mirror (1944) and, in that same year, was twice concussed - once ramming his car into a water tank during a blackout, the other when leaping from his motorbike into a ditch.

Thereafter the booze-fuelled slapstick show just got worse. In 1945 he suffered severe lacerations when he drove his vehicle into a ditch, sending his wife through the windscreen. Three years later he sprained his shoulder, again in a car accident. The following year, 1949, while skiing, he got a speck of dust in his eye. Combined with his continuous drinking, this turned into a 10-year bout of erysipelas, with an inflamed red welt running from his mouth to the bridge of his nose. Then in 1958, he tore ankle ligaments while climbing over a fence, again drunk. Finally, in 1959, he was in yet another car accident,[68] this coinciding with his final booze-up in Spain, by which point he was in seriously bad shape, with ailing kidneys and liver, a likely case of haemochromatosis (iron build-up), cramps, sleeplessness, high blood urea and blood clotting. He was impotent, to boot, and showing signs of premature ageing.[69] "Death is just another whore," as he once wrote, with Evans-like detachment.[70] Finally, at the age of 61, following various unsuccessful treatments for his paranoia and depression, the Nobel Laureate blew his head off with his favourite double-barrelled shotgun. His father had taken his life in a similar fashion at age 57.[71]

Such stories of wanton self-destruction are not that unusual with creatives. Hemingway and Evans aside, the late William Styron suggested that, in its graver clinical manifestation, depression is likely to take 20 per cent of its victims by suicide, many of these being painters, poets and novelists.[72] A far-from-comprehensive list of artist suicides includes poets and writers Hart Crane, Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, John Berryman, Jack London and Primo Levi (he who'd survived the Nazi death camps), painters Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock; and photographer Diane Arbus.

Though still alive at the time of this writing, Bob Dylan was another who did not shy too much from pain. Reeling from a devastating divorce, Dylan's masterpiece 1975 album Blood on the Tracks, yielded some of the greatest songs penned in that period, including: "Tangled up in Blue", "Idiot Wind" and "You're a Big Girl Now". The tone and lyricism of these pieces appeared to underscore an observation he'd made earlier, that "pain sure brings out the best in people, doesn't it?"[73] Dylan's world, arguably, is one where God exists but only just, and where one is required to work out one's salvation with fear, trembling and confusion. On many occasions we see Dylan touching the edges of madness. While never a junkie like Evans or Richards, Dylan was introduced to LSD in 1964 and is assumed to have taken narcotics throughout the early part of his career. In a 1984 Rolling Stone interview, he noted this: "I never got hooked on any drug. [But] who knows what people stick into your drinks or what kinda cigarettes you're smoking."[74]

Back in the '60s, trying to describe his existential sense of alienation, Dylan referred to his earlier readings of Jack Kerouac, confessing: "I felt that that

atmosphere, that everything that Kerouac was saying about the world being completely mad, you know, and that the only people that for him were interesting were mad people, the mad ones, the ones, you know, mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything, at the same time, the ones who moved beyond: all those mad ones. I felt like I fitted right into that bunch."[75] Some 20 years later, and following some disastrous album sales in the late '80s, Dylan once acknowledged that he'd been abandoned by his art and by God and sought desperately to understand the nature of his condition. Deducing existentially that it was only he whom the audience came to see and not the band, he strove with renewed energy to perform as best he could, concluding: "I'm determined to stand whether God will deliver me or not." This insight to stand fast and be true to his art turned out to be a revelation. "Everything just exploded every which way," he said later.[76] In the years that followed, he released some of his finest work, including Oh Mercy (1989) and Time Out of Mind (1997).

A further subset of these "undeveloped" artists are those who didn't die early, living well into old age, unchanged and immutable. Picasso, Dalí and actor Marlon Brando are apt examples, all Peter Pan artists caught in a world of their own intrigue, unable or unwilling to move on. There's little doubt that Picasso was the greatest painter of the last century, but he was a narcissist who fed off the adulation of his public and the women he burnt up along the way- hardly a paragon of emotionally mature adulthood.

Beside this group is a bunch of creatives, who, it appears, did grow up and continued to produce compelling art in subsequent phases of their emotional development. Within the acting fraternity, standouts include Robert Redford, Meryl Streep, Jeff Bridges and Tom Hanks. Each exudes a level of maturity in the sense that they've looked into the mirror, made their art and moved on to make new, different art. Amongst musicians, we could name Stravinsky along with more contemporary artists Paul McCartney, Madonna, James Taylor, Tom Waits, Paul Simon, Bob Dylan, Keith Richards, Bruce Springsteen, Leonard Cohen, Neil Young, Van Morrison and David Bowie. In 1999, Bowie confessed that he no longer drank nor did drugs. "I'm an alcoholic," he said, "so it would be the kiss of death for me to start drinking again. My relationships with my friends and my family, everybody around me, are so good and have been so for many years now I wouldn't do anything to destroy that again. It's very hard to have relationships when you're doing drugs and drinking. You become closed off, unreceptive, insensitive; all the dreadful things you've heard every pop singer ever say - and I was lucky that I found my way out of there. It's been good for me."[77]

While Don McLean is not one of those who have continued to produce great art over time, he recently spoke about his '70s hit Vincent, who, as the song goes, suffered for his sanity. McLean was forthright about the imperative to fight against the undertow of madness. It is one of the strongest statements from any artist about the capacity to prevail. "Everybody, not just artists, everybody is in a struggle – and everybody has to fight against going insane. Everyone. So in a sense if you use just an artist's struggle - and the idea of his sanity - that doesn't just relate to artists. It relates to cabdrivers and carpenters and teachers and everybody who is struggling against all these difficult things in their lives ... One of the things I learnt is that you must struggle. You must fight. And sometimes people who do lose their sanity haven't found that if they struggle and fight - they'll live to fight another day. And they will come through that problem as I've come through many fights and difficulties in my life."[78]

Tied with the preceding chapter on the betrayal of the inner child, this overview on the role of depression and addiction represents a diptych on the undertow of the artistic disposition. Twinned with the more buoyant components of artistic grit and passion, we have what I believe are the four major components of the creative mindset.

In the third section that follows, I shall explore the four disciplines of art, namely proactivity, practice, perspective and the role of instinct, intuition and the unconscious. Together with components of the artistic mindset, these disciplines will be shown to be crucial in the development of creativity.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. This chapter examines the roles of depression, madness and addiction in creativity.
2. Depression is shown to be a significant marker in creativity, though the trick is to find the right balance. Severe depression can be debilitating.
3. Mental instability in creativity appears to manifest most notably as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, while autism-related disorders tend to predominate within disciplines related to mathematics. There are exceptions of course.
4. Within the music industry emotional wellbeing and maturity is often difficult to achieve, most notably because growth comes at a risk of change in the prevailing business model. There are key examples of artists who grow up, and James Taylor and Bruce Springsteen serve as these.
5. Finally, the role of alcohol and narcotic abuse is assessed through the fatal addictions of Bill Evans and Ernest Hemingway.

CHAPTER FIVE – Depression, Madness & Addiction

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