

Cord Drawings by Clients

by Avril Carruthers

An adjunct to the book *Freedom From Toxic Relationships* Allen & Unwin, 2011.

In the process of exploring a cord, I ask clients to draw what they feel or see between themselves and the other person. In the process, the cord is more defined and seen as separate from the client. In objectifying it in this way, the client becomes less affected by the toxic emotion in the cord. There is an immense variety in the way people see them and draw them. It's an intensely individual thing.

In the diagram below, note how the cord changed during the observation period.

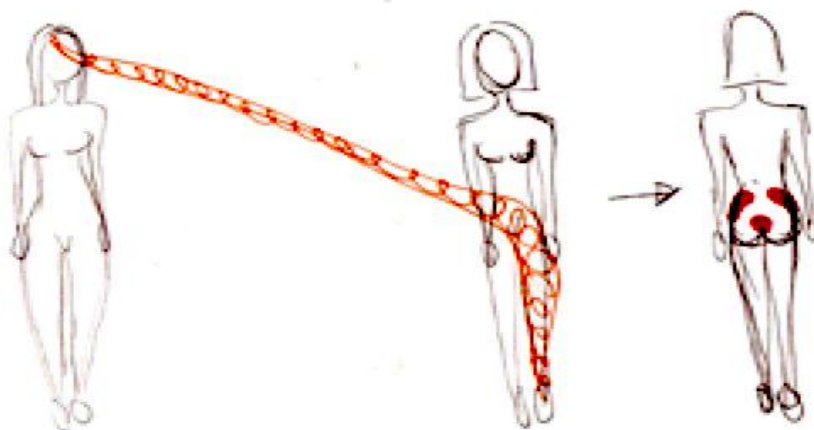


Diagram 1: A drawing of a mother-daughter cord showing how the cord becomes more defined and localised through the period of observation. The figure on the right is the final view before clearing. Note that it appears that there is no longer a cord.

In the drawing below, Samantha drew a cord that went back generations in her family.

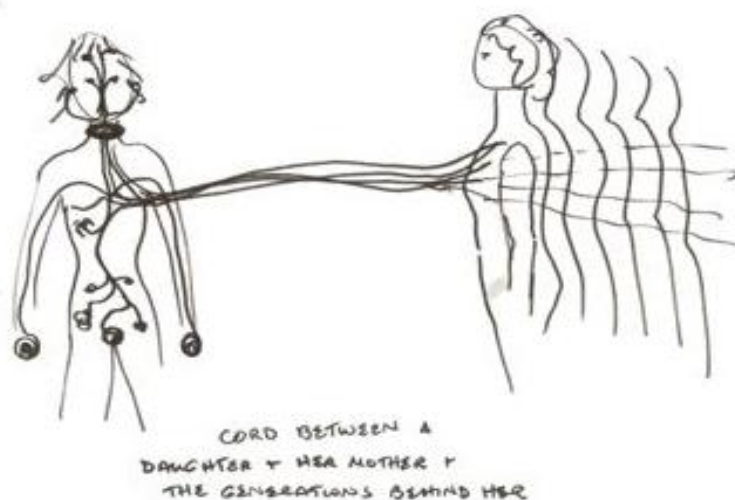


Diagram 2. Samantha's cord with her ancestors. pp. 173-174 of the book.

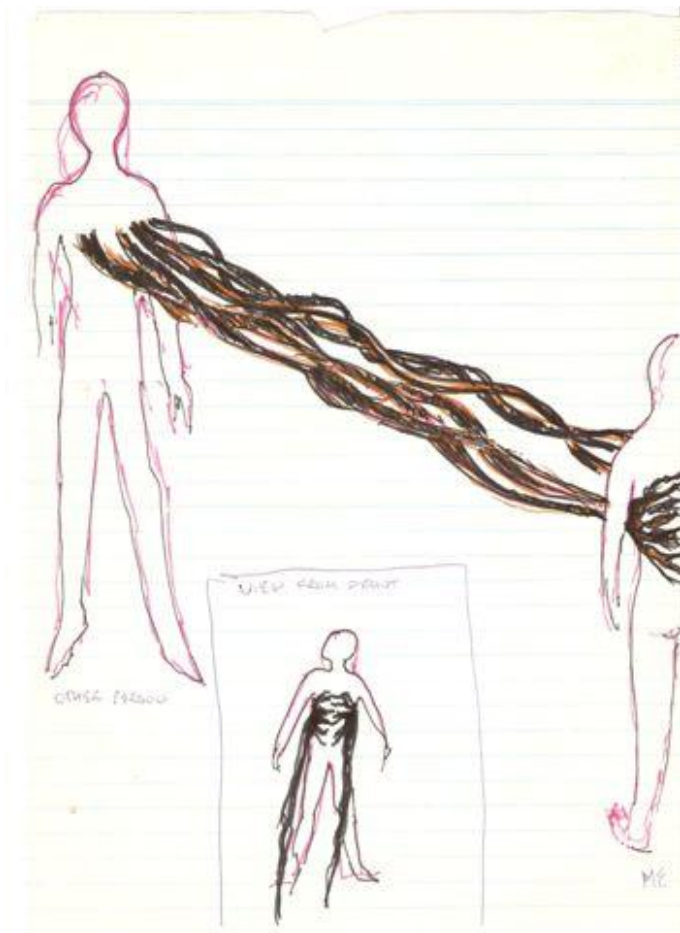


Diagram 3. Maura's cord with her mother

The story that goes with this drawing is found on pp.85-89 of the book.

Here's another depiction, again between a mother and daughter.

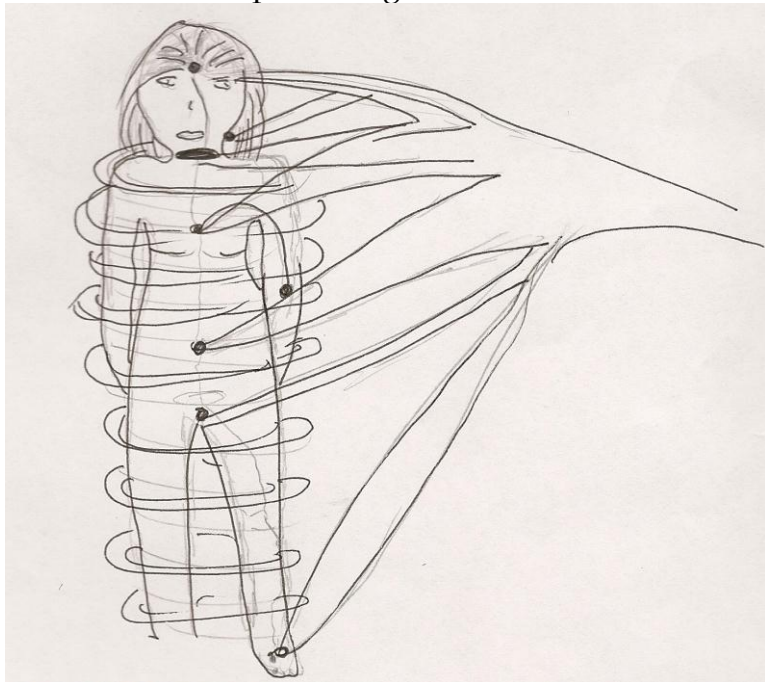


Diagram 4. A cord that binds the daughter and at the same time feeds from her energy centres.

The examples above depict just four ways people see their cords. They can be fleshy in form, like an umbilicus, a tentacle (or several) or an extended limb such as a hand. Other cords look like tree branches or roots, brambles, suckers, tumble weeds, or vines with several strands. There are cords

that look and feel like barbed wire or electrical cord and others depicted as hoses, tubes or pipes of varying sizes. Cords can also be seen or felt as very fine connections of light or energy.

The way a person sees each of the pair, triad or family in the cord connection is often illuminating to the nature of the relationship. Is it one-sided? Does one of the pair mainly drain or dump on the other? Is one dominant or passively aggressively controlling? Is one manipulative and the other fighting to get away? Are both equally angry, vicious, unhappy?

In the drawing below, Noelle depicted her father but it was a cord that affected other relationships with authoritative men in her life. After this clearing Noelle found she was able to leave her dead-end job, where she had been in a submissive relationship with her dominating boss for six years. For the first time she felt she didn't care what her father or boss thought of her. What was more important now was how she felt about herself. Here's how Noelle saw her cord with her father.

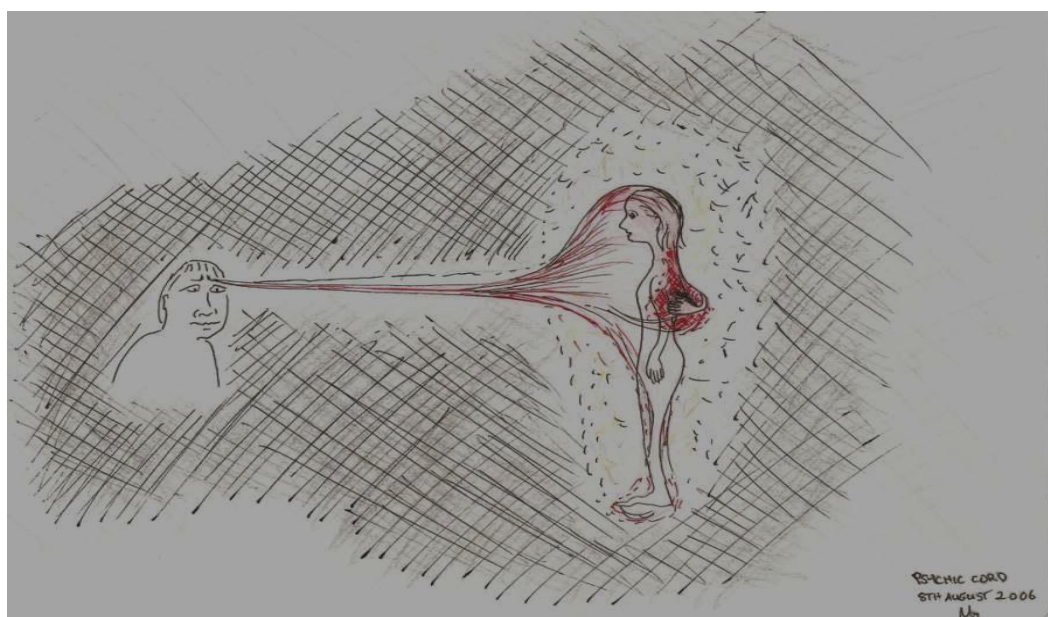


Diagram 5: Noelle's cord with her father.

Note the guiding hand in the back and the expression of worried concern on the father's face. Other points of interest in this drawing, with regard to how Noelle saw the relationship, are that only her father's upper body is shown; he appears to control her from his Third Eye and encapsulates her entire body and energy field; and by shading she has shown the surrounding darkness she feels isolating her and him from life. There is even a suggestion that she is a creation of his mind's eye, an identification that is difficult to entangle in therapy.

We can feel we are helping another person somehow through a cord. This could be a feeling that we are sustaining them with our energy or our good will, or perhaps we are willingly or unwittingly 'handling their stuff', like fallout, for them. We might have agreed to take on their pain or their problems. Unfortunately, this helps neither them nor us. They don't learn to handle their issues, and we can do nothing to process problems that are not ours to solve. In cases like this, it's far more effective help to offer an empathic support that respects the other's ability to learn and grow through their problems, gives appropriate help when asked, but does not take over. Then there's a chance that the relationship can be equal.

Family dynamics

In the case of 16-year-old Thomas it was perhaps coincidental that after the cord was cleared between him and his 60-year-old father Bernard, the teenager grew ten centimetres in one month.

In exploring the cord prior to the clearing, Thomas felt he had somehow agreed as a child to sustain his father energetically. He could feel his father drawing on his youthful vitality through the cord. He knew many of Bernard's restrictive rules were about keeping him a little boy. Thomas had recently acted out his resentment in antisocial behaviour and the destruction of property. It was the reason his mother first brought him to see me.

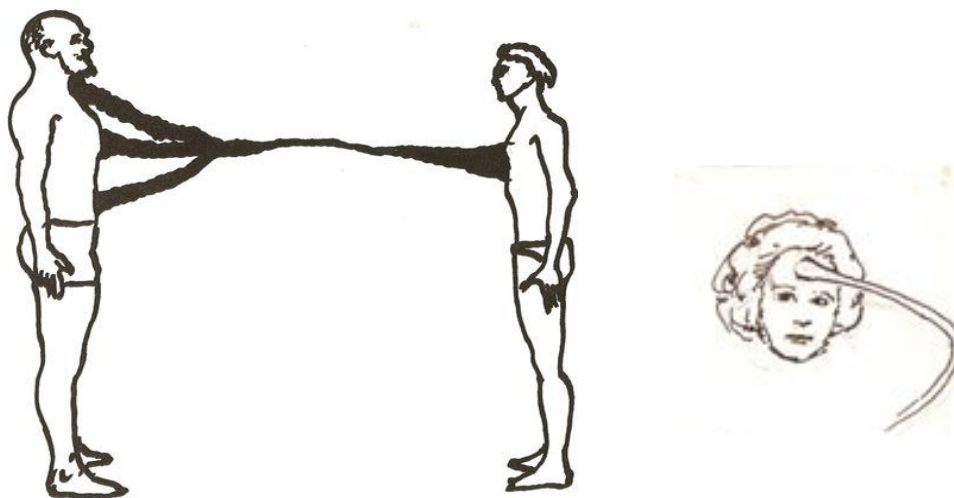


Diagram 6: (left) The cord between Thomas and his father, showing how cords can branch and vary in thickness.

Diagram 7: (right) Bernard's cord to his ex-wife

In recognising the vampire-like power of the cord between them, Thomas worried that his dad's health would fail after the cord between them was cleared. He feared that cutting Bernard off from his energy would suddenly make his dad old. He also knew things could not go on as they were.

After the clearing, both felt freer and the relationship was more open, trusting and mutually respectful than it had ever been. For the first time Bernard allowed his son to go to the skateboard park with his friends and even learn to drive. Over a few weeks Thomas became noticeably calmer and more responsible, and maintained it without his usual wild swings of temperament.

The effects went further, too. Bernard was so impressed at the change in Thomas that he decided he needed to clear his cord to his first wife. Following that clearing he decided he and his current wife Beverley, Thomas' mother, should go on the honeymoon they had never had. In the next week Beverley rang me. 'What have you done to my family?!' she joked. 'Tom's outgrown every stitch of clothing *and* his shoes, and I hardly recognise my husband. He's actually frisky again!'

Positive reconnections

Sometimes cord clearings can achieve mysterious reconnections. As the toxic content of an old cord is recognised and is then cleared, the higher self connection between two people can reassert itself, as in the story of Rachel.

Rachel had been brought up in a fundamentalist sect and was the eldest of eleven children. Her childhood had been marked by frequent absences from school when she was required to look after younger siblings whenever her mother was heavily pregnant, went into labour or was with a newborn. When the last child was being born, Rachel's tolerance evaporated. The constant expectations to be there as surrogate parent to her siblings, the sleepless or disturbed nights when they were ill, the relegation of her own childhood and adolescence, as well as her education, to their needs all suddenly became too much.

At just seventeen, Rachel left home without a word. Knowing that such an action would place her beyond the pale in her religious community, she didn't bother ever trying to reconnect with her family. She stowed away on a ship and landed in another country, without a passport or papers. Her only friend was a sailor who discovered her on the voyage and took pity on her plight. He fed her and hid her at great risk to himself. When she landed, all she had was a contact number the sailor had given her for a friend of his.

When I met Rachel years later, she had had three children and had abandoned them with their different fathers. Living in hiding as an illegal immigrant and earning money as a cleaner, she had come to a point in her life where she wanted to stop running away. We began by clearing the cords she had to her parents, which she felt were full of anger, blame and disappointment.

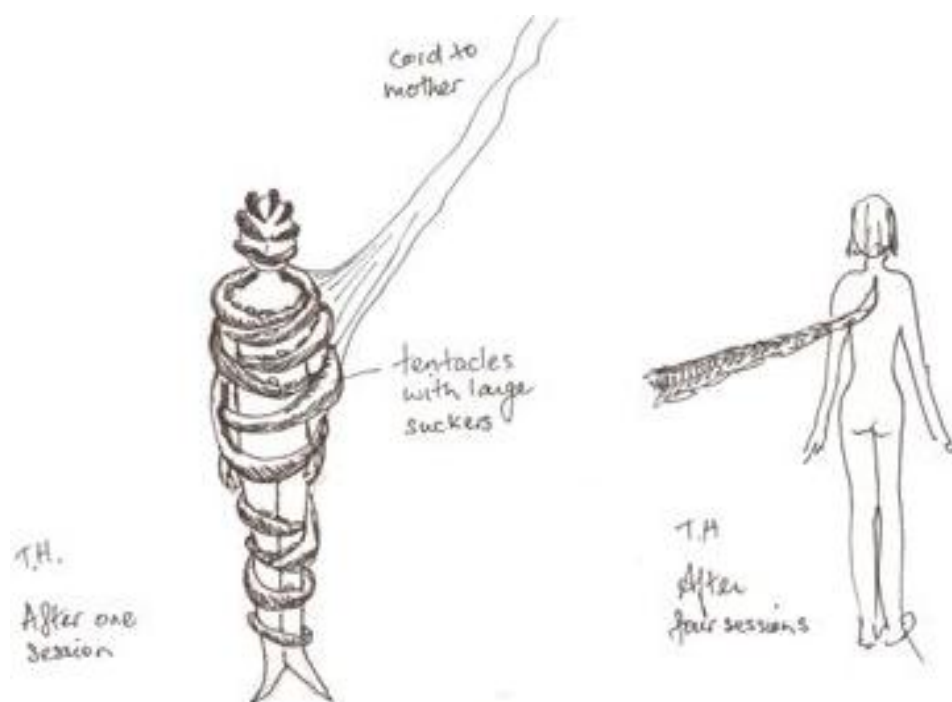


Diagram 8: Rachel's cord with her mother. On the left, at the first mapping. On the right, just before the clearing. Note how the cord crystallises out of a person's body through the observation period, making it far easier to clear.

A few days after the clearing of her cord to her mother, Rachel rang me in great excitement. She had received a letter from her mother. She had no idea how her mother had known her address. The mystery remained until she found out that her old friend the sailor who had helped her years ago, had also contacted her mother and kept her informed as to Rachel's whereabouts, without letting Rachel know. The strange thing was that her mother had apparently known for years where Rachel was, even though she had moved many times. She had never contacted her daughter through all that time.

Although Rachel had told no-one about the clearing, the older woman had felt the need – or the freedom – to write to her runaway daughter. The letter was dated on the day of the ritual. Coincidence? Perhaps.

What Rachel found most intriguing, as well as gratifying, was that the letter was full of love and regret about the demands put on her in her childhood and adolescence, things that Rachel was consciously letting go of during her session. Apart from a heartfelt apology, the letter contained an

international money order. Rachel came in to see me immediately. She looked as though the load of years had been lifted from her, as in fact, it had.

After the clearing a new phase in Rachel's life began. She married a man she loved and became pregnant once more. She contacted the fathers of the children she had abandoned and made reconciliations, starting the long slow process to be a mother to them again. She took advantage of an amnesty on illegal immigrants to become a legal citizen, and for the first time, travelled back home with her new husband and daughter to visit her parents. Astoundingly, her parents disregarded the rules of the sect and embraced their long lost daughter in a joyful family reunion.

Rachel commented that she felt she was living her own life for the first time.

In the cord clearing, the toxic emotions of this family's past relationship were suddenly gone. No more guilt and pain, no more resentment and frustration, no more avoidance of responsibility, simply a flow of love that had always lain beneath the reactive emotion. Once that was gone, the true connection between parents and daughter could re-establish itself. Rachel is making up for lost time with her siblings as well as her own children.

Twins

A cord between twins – whether identical or not – is usually more apparent than between other siblings. In documented cases where separated twins go to different adoptive parents and are not told anything of their birth family, a persistent feeling of incompleteness will sometimes motivate a search in which one turns up the other twin. Often the similarities in their lives are eerie, even to the names of their spouses or their children. The cord that formed between them as they shared a womb allows this unknown resonance, and it's the cord that reunites them.

In 20-year-old Jacinta and Joanna, brought up together and like many identical twins, dressed alike through their childhood and often mistaken one for the other, the cord was becoming more and more acrid and restricting. Their struggle for individual identity was hampered by old patterns that had them always doing the same things and doing them together. It was problematic particularly for Jacinta, and she began working with me to explore and eventually clear the cord between them. Joanna, on the other hand, feared the clearing would separate them and eliminate their connection completely. Nothing would convince her that freedom was a desirable thing for both of them.

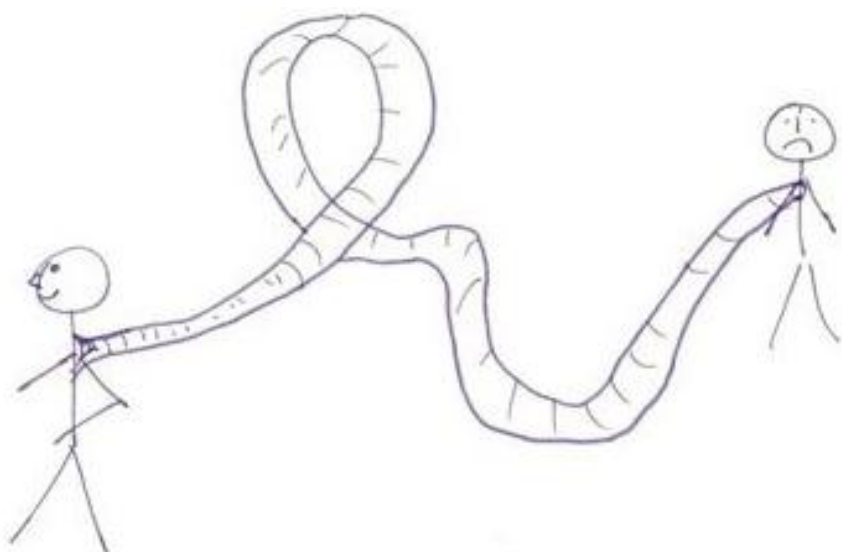


Diagram 9: Jacinta and Joanna

In the fortnight after the clearing, however, it was Joanna who rang me to say how wonderful her relationship with Jacinta now felt and how much cleaner it was. She told me she no longer needed to play the emotional mind games she had always played with her twin, and was looking forward to her future and a far better relationship with her.

Freed from the toxic cord, the two were able to be themselves without worrying about the other. They were able either to be together or separate when they wanted to, with no feelings of obligation or guilt. Best of all, their telepathic connection remains – it's far clearer now without the emotional pulls and pushes they both felt were so uncomfortable previously.

A cord with a psychopathic narcissist

If cords aren't dealt with, other relationships can only deteriorate. Therese was in the process of extricating herself from an abusive relationship, with yet another psychopathic narcissist. Her latest partner Frank, one on a long list, had an addiction to methamphetamine – ice, or crystal. On one high he had become homicidal. Paranoid that those nearest him were plotting to kill him, he attempted to strangle Therese. Then he beat her, broke her cheekbone and cut her face with a knife. When she fell unconscious, he left the apartment, believing her dead. Their infant son lay unharmed, still in his cot.

Therese regained consciousness and called a friend who took her to hospital. She feared Frank would come after any friends she stayed with and taking her baby with her, went to a refuge. The police arrested Frank for attempted murder but as often happens with domestic violence, he was allowed bail and released. He came straight after Therese. After several weeks of harassment and being stalked, the police put her in witness protection. It took months for her to recover from her physical injuries. Emotionally she was still extremely fragile. Eventually, with a different name, she took a new job, only to be terrified when Frank turned up at her workplace, again threatening her. He claimed he'd tracked her online. He'd been watching her and boasted that she'd never get away. He said quite clearly that he wouldn't stop until he killed her. She was able to lock herself in an office and called police, who subdued him eventually and took him away.

A year later, in another country, Therese decided it was time to investigate why she invariably found herself in relationship with outwardly charming men who turned out to be self-absorbed narcissists. Frank had seemed completely different to start with. With ice, he changed radically. But even before his addiction got out of control, sending him criminally insane, Therese had noticed he was unable to handle the slightest criticism due to the paranoia and grandiose delusions of his narcissism.

In mapping the cord they shared, Therese saw and felt a boa constrictor wrapped around her throat and upper body. When I asked whether she had felt it before, she said she had. Surprisingly, she added that she had first noticed it at the age of two or three. Investigating its source, it appeared that the cord with Frank had piggybacked on at least one other cord with her siblings. In particular, with an elder, abusive brother, also a narcissist who had paranoid delusions and felt entitled to special treatment wherever he was.

The underlying *samskaric*¹ wound had come from being physically abused by this brother from a very early age. The wound had resonated with similar dynamics with narcissists all her life.

¹ The word *samskara* derives from the Sanskrit and denotes an intense emotional wound in our past. Though the wound was long ago, the scar remains, and the unresolved energy of a *samskara* can affect us life long unless we address it and heal it.



Although the usual way is to clear the most recent cord, then work our way down to the underlying *samskaric* wound, in Therese's case it was the reverse. As we explored the layers in this cluster of cords, it was the original wound and not the cord that resonated loudest and most insistently in her energy field. Along with that wound we discharged her Victim Character, whose automatic sense of powerlessness was the result of being abused as a tiny child. She realised that this was why she had attracted violent predators as partners. It was only then that we cleared the cord to her brother.

Diagram 10: Therese felt a massive boa constrictor around her neck and upper body

problem. She felt she might not need to clear the cord to him, but there were still cords to her other siblings and her parents. Her large family had made Therese their scapegoat her all through her childhood.

After we cleared the cords to all her family the changes in Therese became even more apparent. Her friends remarked that she seemed a bigger presence in her own life. She is far more assertive. She has far more energy to deal with the challenges in her way. Free of the entangling cords, she remembered a time early in her life when she had a profound spiritual experience that changed her life for a period. She has re-connected to the close friends who are her spiritual family with the certainty that she belongs and is deeply loved.

A year later, Therese was triggered by the narcissistic behaviour of someone she met socially and decided it was time, finally to clear the cord with Frank. Previously, if she met a narcissist, she was drawn in by their charismatic qualities and the fractured self she could see beneath, that she wanted to help. Now, she simply recognises the condition and feels no pull at all to be anything but neutral.

Sinister connections

Twenty-five year old Frances was having a few health problems when a friend recommended a charismatic healer called Damon. He was a self-styled wizard who believed he received direct guidance from the Archangel Michael. Frances was sceptical at first, but she also had a Spiritual Seeker Character that wanted to believe in miracles. She fell under Damon's spell and projected Guru-hood onto him. Soon he convinced her that having sex with him would enable him to fill her with the healing power of the archangel. Frances told me she felt he had put her into a trance, and it wasn't until he'd finished that she realised what had happened.

She was so repulsed by the experience, and in fact by the energy she felt while near him, that she stopped seeing him and got as far away from him as she could. A short time later she felt somehow he was still draining her energy from a distance. Her health problems became much worse and she was diagnosed with chronic fatigue. She had suffered with this baffling condition for two years before she first saw me.

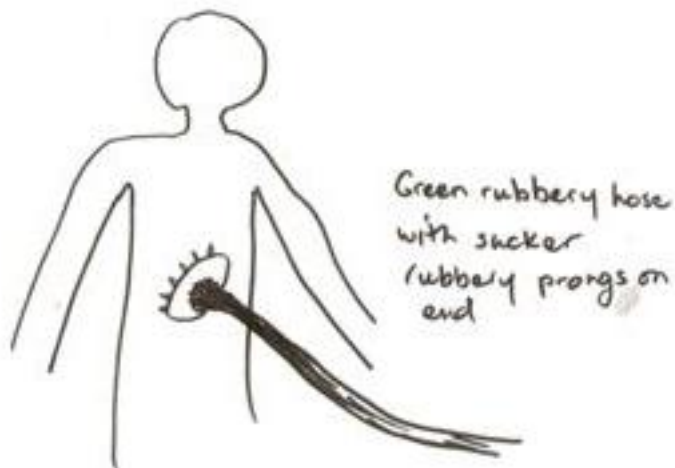


Diagram 11: Frances' cord with Damon, a bogus spiritual healer.

In mapping the cord she detected a large plug in her mid abdominal area through which her life force was being sucked out daily. She now believed Damon was mentally ill and deluded, but not intentionally evil. All the same, no matter how she tried to protect herself with sandalwood oil, salt rubs or smudging herself with sage, it was only a formal clearing ritual that finally rid her of the attachment to this unfortunate man, after which some of her energy and health began to return.

Unfortunately, as part of the *samskaric* legacy of her relationship with Damon, Frances maintained a deep distrust of her own experience and of healers. We were in the process of mapping the source of the *samskara* to discharge her fear when she rang to cancel all further sessions.

A dragon in my vagina

Unless we are able to pinpoint the hold the past has over us, it can impact us in all kinds of insidious ways. Emma felt she was fully over David, who had been unbearably possessive and jealous. Over the next couple of years she found two men she really liked, but the relationships had faded one after the other. The men seemingly lost interest soon after a sexual relationship began.

After her latest boyfriend, Lars, told her about a weird experience he had had with her while love-making, she brought him along to investigate the problem. Like Emma, Lars was an experienced meditator. He had never before experienced what he described to Emma and me in the session. He admitted he was a little freaked by it.

It was as though something didn't want him to make love to Emma, he said. During their lovemaking he had felt a fierce energetic attack on his penis. It was a hateful energy, he said, like sharp, biting teeth. At first he had withdrawn, confused, wondering whether Emma was fully willing to make love. When she assured him she was more than willing, he had tried to continue, only to feel an even fiercer antagonistic force trying to keep him out.

In the myths of several cultures there exists the idea of *dentata* – or teeth in the vagina of a fearsome, dominating woman. In psychoanalytic terms the concept *vagina dentata* is considered to indicate a fear of castration. Lars found this puzzling, considering he had never experienced even the thought before. He maintained he hadn't ever worried about castration, and wasn't now – well, not enough to stop him making love to Emma.

In their joint session Emma realised that the energy Lars was describing was exactly the way her jealous ex-boyfriend David behaved. She began to map what soon emerged as a cord. It appeared that David had wanted to make sure that if he couldn't have her, no-one would.

To her dismay, Emma discovered a beast resembling a dragon guarded her vagina. That it was made of energy instead of flesh and blood didn't reduce its ferocity at all. She felt its teeth snap angrily when she thought of making love to Lars.

David had deliberately put it there, she felt, in his sperm. But she grew puzzled as they had always used condoms. She had seen the dragon with a milky white consistency like 'energetic semen' that David had deposited as a marker to keep other men away. But if Lars had not been so perceptive, Emma would probably never have got to the bottom of it. She then remembered that since they had split, even though she had asked him to stop calling, David had an uncanny and annoying habit of ringing her the next day after she had had sex with another man. The cord between them had evidently let him know what was happening.

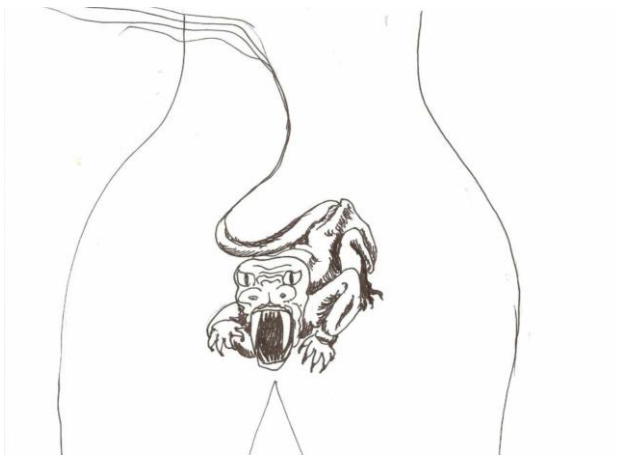


Diagram 12: The dragon David left in Emma's vagina – pp. 209-211 of the book

In the follow-up session two weeks after clearing this cord, Lars reported that the dragon was definitely gone. Though David had rung and left a series of messages in the three days after the clearing – which Emma had not returned – he had not rung since.

It's not uncommon for this proprietorial kind of attachment to show up in a sexual context. The insecurities that invariably set up the formation of a cord are most exposed and threatened in the intimacy of a sexual relationship.

Nor is it unusual for a person on the other end of a cord – who doesn't want to let go – to try to re-establish contact right after a cord clearing. It happens often, even when that person has no idea about the clearing and no other contact with their former partner. On some level they feel the disconnection – which in many cases they try quite desperately to re-establish.

When the cord is no longer being fed from the other end, however, it no longer works. The connection has been broken.

Dementia

Sometime the very opposite of what we intend in caring and love for the elderly can occur. Marita looked after her aged mother for years until her dementia became too much for Marita to deal with alone. Though she didn't feel good about it, Marita finally admitted that the constant worry and the need to be there 24/7 in case her mother wandered off or fell was too much for her. She moved her mother to a nursing home, where she visited her every day, even though her mother no longer knew her. The older woman often complained to her that no-one visited, as though she were a stranger. It hurt Marita deeply.

Lately Marita had been experiencing a marked absent-mindedness, with gaps in her memory. She would forget what she was saying in the middle of a sentence, why she'd gone into a particular room or what she needed at the supermarket. She often lost her keys and had alarming thoughts that she hadn't turned off the iron or the gas, because she couldn't remember doing so.

These could have been symptoms of depression, but even though Marita was only in her forties, she was convinced she was somehow catching her mother's dementia.

It made her feel even guiltier, because she no longer wanted to visit her mother. It was such hard work, and hurtful, since her mother didn't recognise her and often snapped angrily at her, as she did at staff.

When Marita came for her first session she commented that she wanted to save her mother from suffering and that she consciously let her mother draw on her strength. But lately, she had been feeling that it was draining her beyond what she could bear. Since she had no rational basis for this, she wondered whether it was all just her imagination. If she withdrew her energetic support, would her mother suffer?

We began mapping what I knew to be a cord, but which Marita had never thought of before. As always, I was careful not to suggest anything of what I was seeing, but allowed her to discover it herself in the perceptive space of the Third Eye.

As the session proceeded, Marita saw a tangled tumbleweed of confusion that filled the space around their two heads whenever she was with her mother. It was there even when she was elsewhere and just thought of her mother. Instead of giving her mother energy and strength, Marita saw that she was merely the unconscious dumping ground for her mother's mental confusion. This then flowed back to the older woman along with Marita's guilt and grief whenever she drew on her daughter's energy. So the cord was neither helping her nor fulfilling Marita's loving intention.



Diagram 13: Marita's tangled cord with her mother, who had dementia – pp. 201-203 of the book.

After I cleared the cord, Marita stayed away from the nursing home for three days. At that point she got a call from the Charge Sister that her mother was surprisingly lucid that day. She was asking for Marita, saying she hadn't seen her for three days. Used to her mother's not knowing who she was or whether she had visited, Marita had some trepidation in going to the nursing home. To her amazement, her mother was alert and in seeming full possession of her senses. Marita took her out for a drive and it was the happiest and most relaxed she had seen her for some time.

The Sister warned her that her mother's dementia might return at any time, and that it was more or less normal to have patches of lucidity. Nevertheless, Marita had never seen such a big change, and believed it was because of the clearing, and not simply a coincidence.

When her mother's dementia did return, Marita commented to me that with her new level of perception she had noticed a contagious confusion of the same tumbleweed configuration as she had seen between her mother and herself amongst the elderly residents of the nursing home, and among some of the staff.

For herself, however, there was a permanent change. She no longer allowed herself to feel guilty and, though sad, accepted her mother's deteriorating state. Her own confusion was far less, though she still felt its resonance when she visited twice a week and tuned into her mother.

Chaos rules

Roxy hated it when her mum Alexa rang and would often plead work or other commitments that meant she couldn't spend time with her. Since leaving home Roxy had worked hard to build structure and order into her life and was happy in her relationship and at a job she enjoyed as an accountant. Her mother, on the other hand, had a seeming inability to settle down or be happy, and her life was a litany of disappointments and broken relationships. Currently self-employed as a tarot-card reader, Alexa maintained everything was predestined and meant to be exactly as it was. This did not apply when it came to Roxy's life, as she saw it.

To Alexa, her daughter was impossibly rigid and unadventurous. She despaired of her ever fulfilling the scintillating potential she had hoped for her, particularly in light of the lessons in art, singing and dance she had paid for her as a child. Alexa feared she'd never have the close relationship she wanted with her, because Roxy and she simply weren't 'on the same page'. Roxy craved stability. Alexa scorned it. Roxy grimly said she had to be this way because her mother's life had always been wildly erratic, a series of failed relationships and desultory attempts to start bizarre business ventures that inevitably petered out.

Roxy described a typical phone call from her histrionic mother that began with a dramatic announcement of some startling event that drew the spotlight solely over her. To Alexa, Roxy's life was so boring that she was not interested in hearing about it. If she did happen to hear Roxy talking about something meaningful or challenging in her life, Alexa dismissed it as trite or cliché. Genuine emotion failed to resonate with her, while melodrama turned her scornful despite her own frequent indulgence in it. As a result, she failed to read accurately the men she hoped to form lasting relationships with, who inevitably turned out to be empty charmers happy to exploit her neediness for a one-night-stand, leaving her devastated and shocked.

In session, Roxy described a recent visit in which her mother had stayed overnight with her and her husband. Without any obvious ploys, Alexa had hijacked attention with tales of her latest disasters. Other subjects of conversation introduced by Roxy or her husband were somehow manoeuvred back to Alexa's own situation. Roxy observed her mother simply waiting 'like a black hole' till she or her husband had finished talking. She would then continue on her own train of thought. After a few hours of this, Roxy's only recourse was rudeness and rejection, leaving Alexa bewildered and even unhappier. Roxy, meanwhile was furious she'd once again been manipulated by her mother's Nothing Works for Me Character.

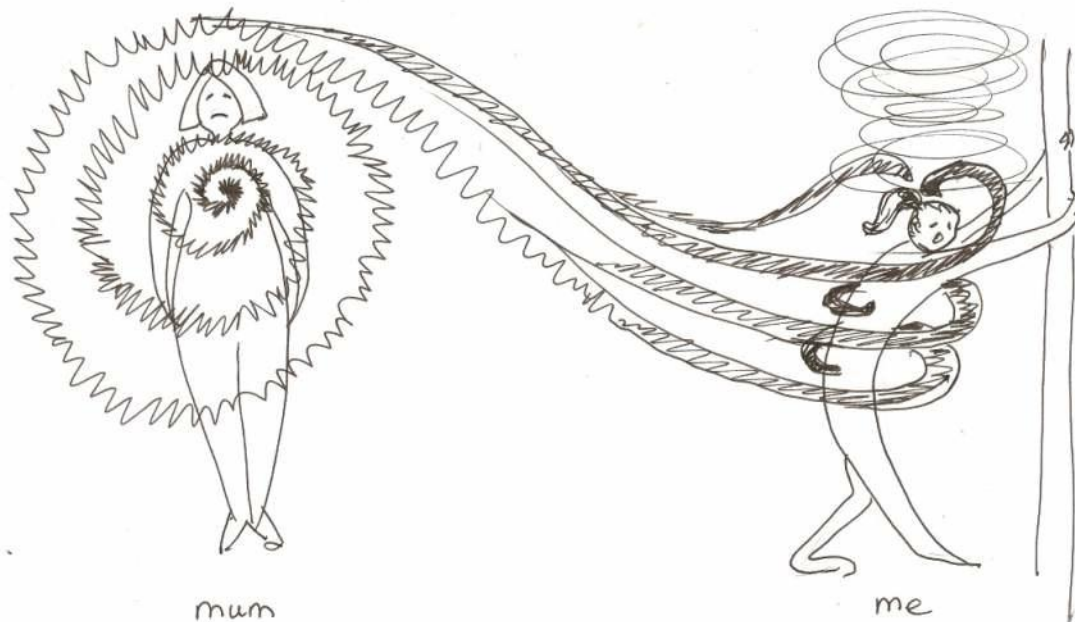


Diagram 14: Roxy felt drawn into her mother's chaos.

Roxy felt a dark vortex of chaos around her mother that pulled Roxy's carefully structured, ordered life apart and sucked her into Alexa's habitual turmoil. It forced her to attend to her mother's neediness but never allowed her to actually help. It even worked during the night. Roxy found herself unable to sleep, tossing and turning, unable to find her normal peaceful frame of mind. Roxy determined never to allow her mother to stay again, and in the months that followed that visit, several phone calls from Alexa ended in Roxy simply hanging up.

After the cord was cleared on Roxy's side, she was much less antagonistic and angry towards Alexa. She was assertive without being aggressive, able to be with her mother for short, pre-determined amounts of time that allowed her to stay calm, centred and even affectionate. On her part, Alexa was still needy, though she showed this far less when interacting with Roxy. She seemed to accept that Roxy had a right to the kind of life that suited her and no longer tried to change her or expect attention that Roxy could not and would not give.

A person with **Histrionic Personality Disorder** like Alexa can be an attention seeking Drama Queen of either sex who sucks attention and life force from everyone around her wherever she is. Even some houseplants die after a few days in close proximity. Her neediness is expressed with dramatic outrage and despair. She experiences constant hopeful expectations, disappointments and betrayals with an apparent lack of insight as to cause and effect of these scenarios, and refuses to take a healthier or more realistic attitude. Her misery is palpable and she seems to wallow in it, imposing on others for sympathy and support. Those with experience of her frequently reject her in ways that devastate her, breaking her heart each time in a vicious circle of victimhood. In turn,

she rejects everyone unless they are able to serve her needs, and criticises them for having other priorities than being there for her.

Her communication is often confusing and mysterious. She'll begin a sentence, carefully eyeing the person she is addressing to see if she is creating the effect she desires. If the response is not as she'd like it, she switches to another line of conversation, confusing her listeners and allowing her to complain that she is constantly misunderstood.

She makes sure she has a range of friends she can call on. Though they are there for her, she drains them so quickly that she often does not feel matched. She creates cords by leaving belongings, carelessly, with friends. Even so, she was shocked at one such friend who objected to Alexa 'leaving her shit' behind her.

Reading the signs

In mapping a cord we may 'see' something that's more a symbolic representation than the actual thing.

In talking with a client, Eric, about his drawing below, I assumed that he had drawn himself in front, while the one in the distance was the other person. Eric corrected me and was immediately puzzled as he realised it didn't make sense. He saw himself as being far away, while the person to whom he was connected by a toxic cord loomed large in his life. It was a significant moment in which he realised that he was giving too much power and space away to the other person, and the beginning of his intention to rectify that.

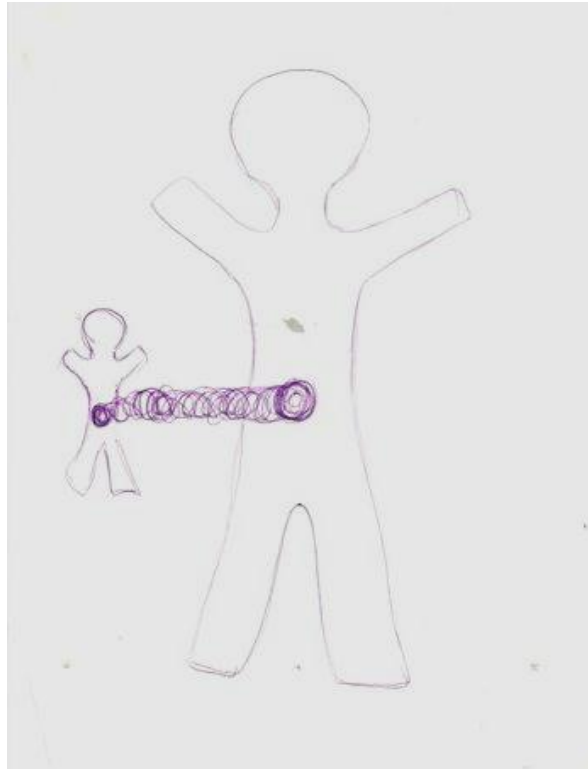


Diagram 15: Eric's cord made him feel small

The drawing also alerted Eric to the rather strange representation of himself and the other person as having no hands. At first, he apologised unnecessarily for not being a good artist. In fact, the way he had drawn the figures was far more telling precisely in how he saw both himself and the other - as bland cardboard cut outs or gingerbread men with no defining features, and no means

to 'handle' issues in their lives. The thin metal spiral of the 'slinky' that joined them was also indicative.

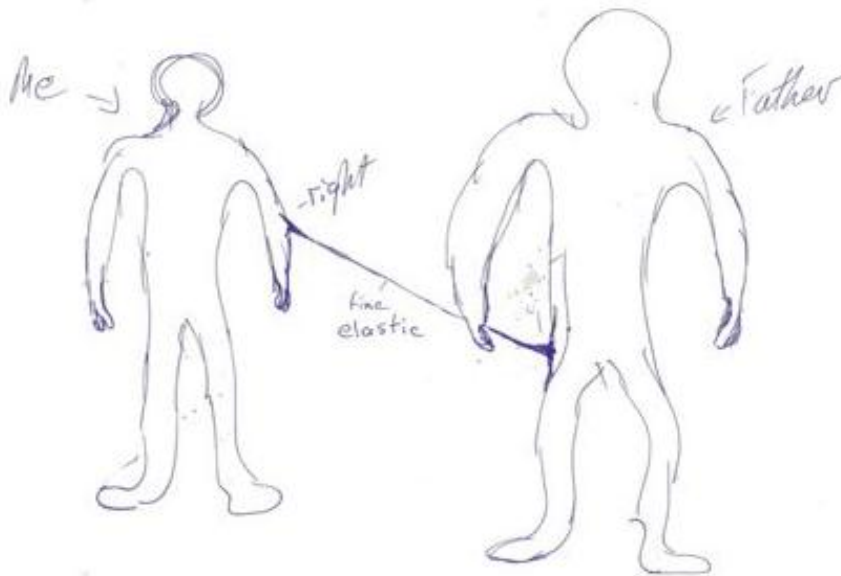


Diagram 16: Adam's cord with his father

The way Adam depicted his father, who in the above drawing looks more like a gorilla than a man, illustrated how he felt about him. Physiologically, his father was of the same shape and size as his now adult son. In Adam's mind, he saw him as a beast. Talking about this brought up many issues Adam had with his father from his childhood. Note that Adam, like Eric, is in the background in this drawing. The cord is made of elastic – representing how Adam feels that no matter where he is, his father's influence stretches to keep the connection.

Drained but never good enough

In the drawing below, Cecilia drew how she felt the cord to her parents was draining her. It was a potent illustration of how disempowered she felt by them and, specifically, by how they criticised and judged her. At the same time, their expectations of her to achieve highly were constant and intense. Interestingly, there's a suggestion of a kind of sacrificial offering in the placement and orientation of her own body relative to her parents and simultaneously, a vortex in the shape of a feeding funnel from her core.

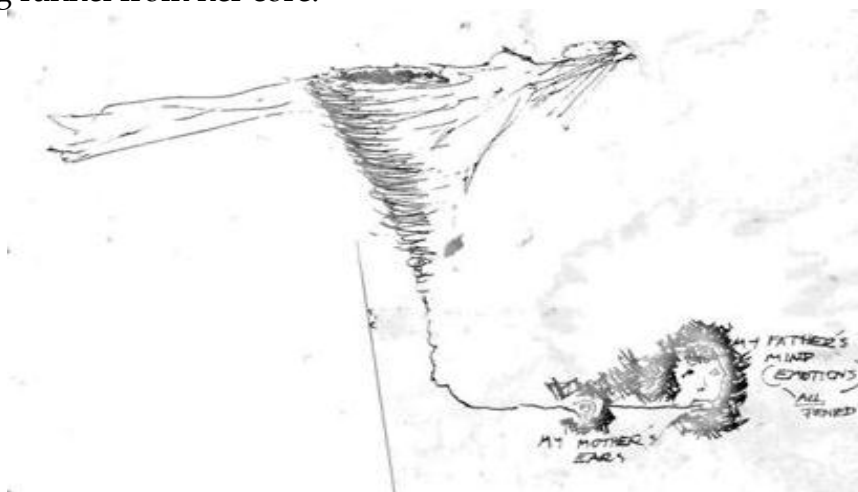


Fig 17: Cecilia's cord was a vortex that drained her energy, through her mother's ears to her father's mind.

Breast cords - nurturing or draining?

Here's a cord between mother and daughter from breast to breast, and another below it by a different client, showing some similarities and some significant differences.



Diagram 18



Diagram 19

Both drawings portray the nurturing maternal relationship in a unique way. In the first one, the daughter's energy, depicted by the lines in the breast on the upper right, is seen as flowing and light. Her mother's, on the lower left, is dark, far more crystallised, even solidified, while the circles that fill that breast appear to be eyes. In this instance, the daughter felt her mother's energy was both intrusive and restricting.

In the second drawing above, the cord is seen as a kind of segmented worm that looks alive. The ends are different. Again, one is more complex and organised while the other is simpler.

Keeping my baby safe under my heart

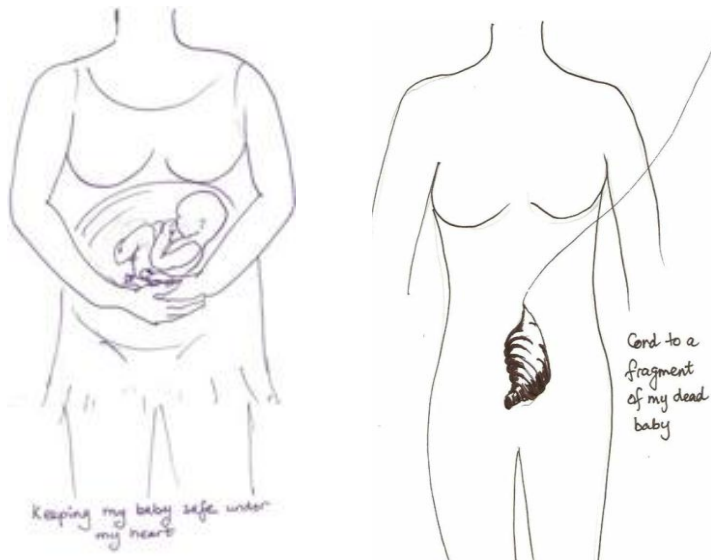


Diagram 20: (left) before the clearing and Diagram 21: (right) after two weeks of observation
This story is on pp. 68-69 of the book.

The drawing above shows how Danielle first depicted her dead baby, which had been strangled by the umbilical cord during birth. She was convinced she was keeping the baby safe under her heart, even many years later. After two weeks of observation in session, Danielle saw that in fact it was a parasite feeding on the connection between her and her dead infant, draining her energy and feeding on her still profound sadness and loss. Following this clearing, Danielle's many gynaecological problems began to improve and she was able to move on from her loss.

The mother of all attachments

Liam's cord to his mother was the basis for many others attached to the same general areas around his hips. Because it was an obvious, less than completely healthy attachment, we cleared it first. Others then emerged, with a slightly different flavour, that connected to his maternal grandfather and his father, as well as entities that had entered through the original breach in his energy field. Eventually he uncovered an entity and cord to a childhood abuser. All were cleared as they came up.

It's interesting to note that Liam's drawing below of this first cord shows a boy's body and not that of a fully grown man, as he is. It was something Liam himself had not even noticed, but which gave further fuel for exploration in therapy. Evidently at the time, he still saw himself as a child, though he would not now represent himself in this way.

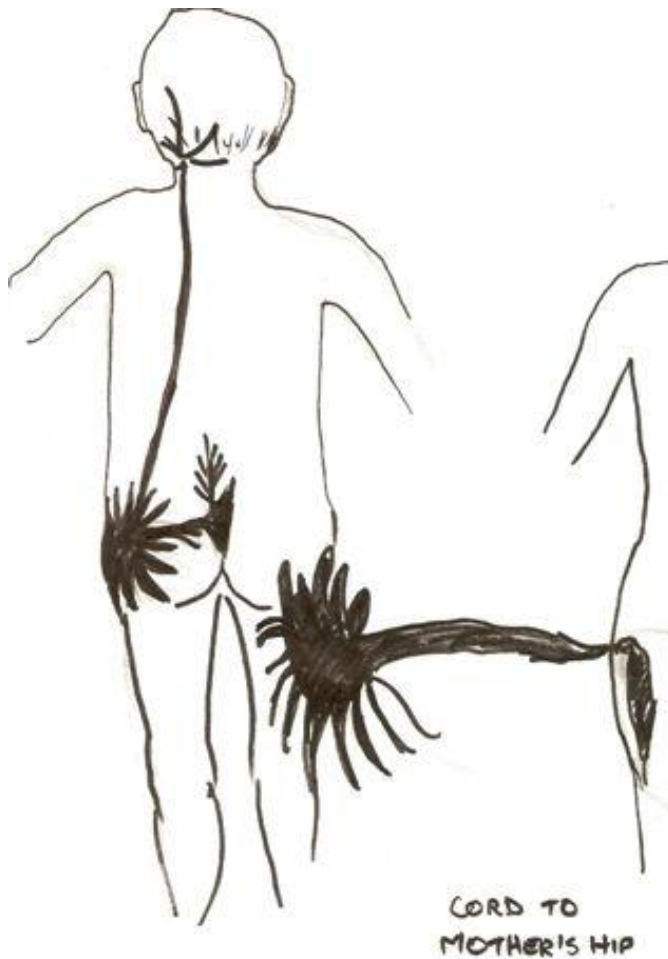


Diagram 22: Liam's cord to his mother's hip

A cord to an abuser

A cord can carry energy for many years after the relationship has ended. It seems to depend on the intensity of that relationship. Few encounters can be more intense or painful than rape, particularly if a child is involved.

William's cord to the man who abused him when he was six had lain unknown for nearly 30 years, but it had affected his sexual identity, his independence and his confidence deeply. He felt it as a giant tick insect on his right side that fed on his sexual energy and at the same time conveyed the abuser's self-hatred and shame to William. Clearing this cord uncovered other abusive connections before this incident, but this clearing helped William on his journey to confident and independent adulthood. In time, the other toxic connections were also cleared.

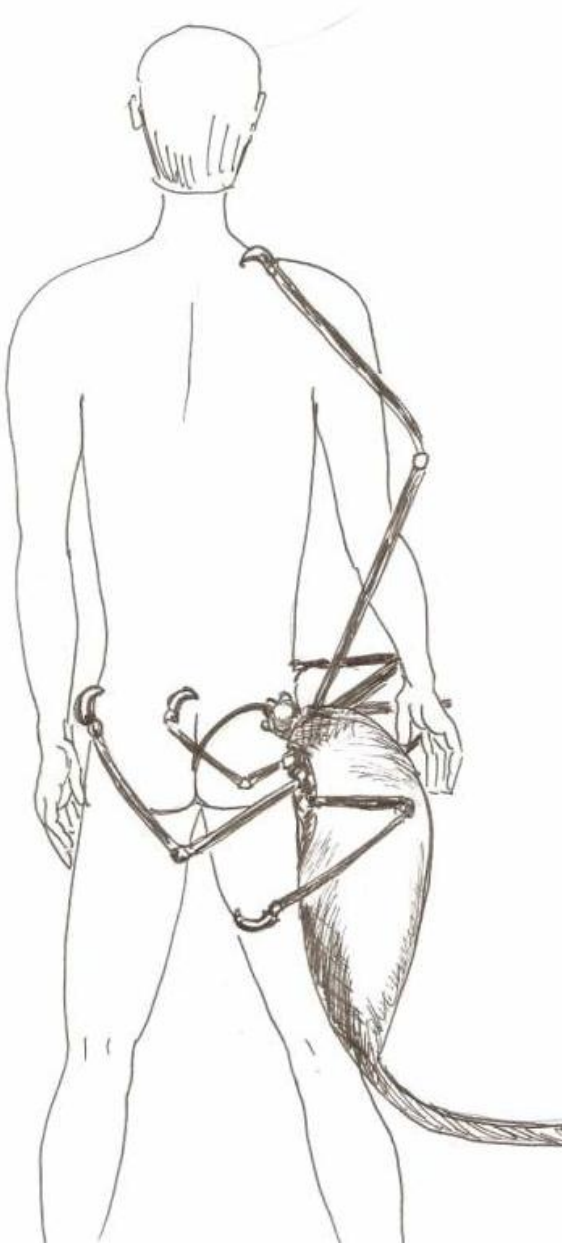


Diagram 23: William's cord to his abuser. This story is found on pp. 64-67 of the book Freedom From Toxic Relationships.

Every cord drawing is different, and yet they share the same features of a toxic conduit that links people who wish to be free. If we have a cord connection that is not toxic it's generally depicted as light and not binding, but nourishing.

Here's an example of a cord on several levels, both toxic and nourishing.

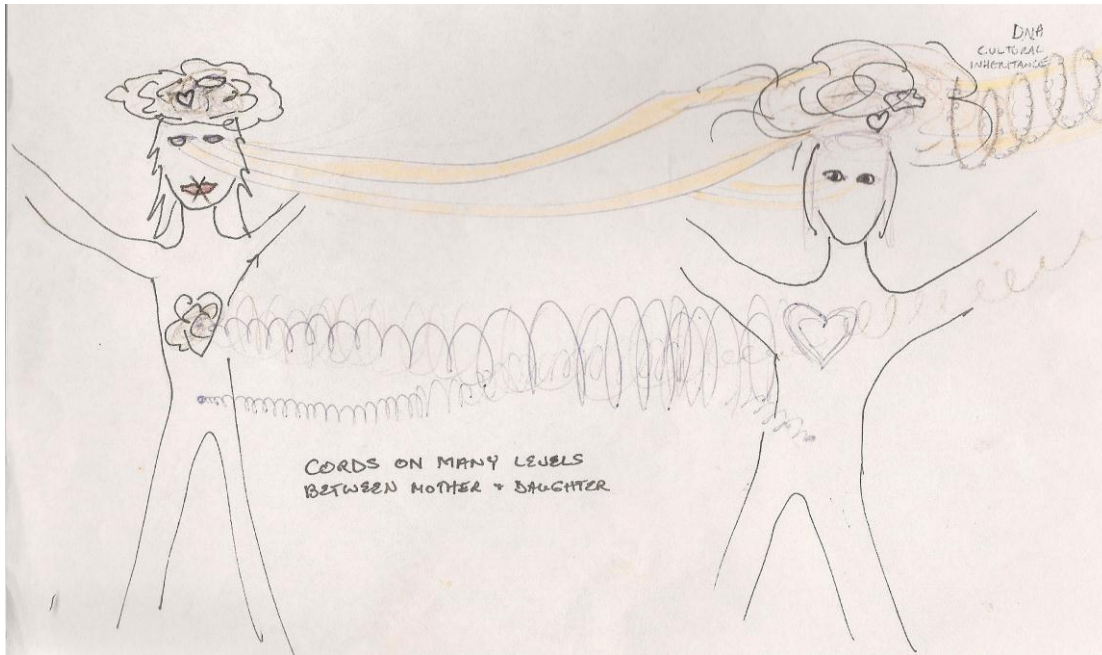


Diagram 24: A cord on many levels

This toxic cord contained painful resentment, blame, disappointment and expectations. On the other hand, there was also a loving connection that the more painful cord interfered with. Their history entailed much that was unresolved, which the daughter was able to address this during the process of mapping the cord.

It's important to know that a cord clearing only clears the mucky stuff from a connection. After the cord was cleared, both the mother and daughter were able to relate as they really wanted to, more lovingly and respectfully than they had ever been able to before.

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