

DR SCOTT SIMPSON

box

Children

we think of children as
small adults
and in some ways, they are
little feet, little hands
little heads, little hearts
all the things we have later in life
only smaller
bite-sized like the candy bars
at Halloween time
just like the big ones
only small enough
you can eat twenty at one sitting

but experience adds new tendons
and nerve endings
trauma creates connective tissue
often scarred-- less flexible
old friends lend their words
sometimes their faces
relationships gone bad
embed warning signs
behind our eyes
sometimes blinding us

children have none of that
they have partial bodies
that seem complete
but haven't yet grown the organs
that will be most central
later in life

oh, we all need our stomachs
of course
we need our colons
our livers
our lungs
we even need our spleens
and appendices
these things however are vehicles

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for us to develop what we
really need
relationship, identity, love, opinion
passion, bias

and once we've grown those
we forget where they came from
-- they came from our bodies
because our bodies are dying
and we like to think our opinions
relationships, loves, biases, passions
are eternal

children become aware of their bodies
and all parts are equal
my nose as valuable as my toe
my belly as beautiful as my arm
my finger as fun as my penis

but when adult trauma collides
with the body of a child
scarred identity latches itself
to unscarred flesh
children may sprout webs
of cancerous fiber
linking awkwardly
body parts, concepts, people, fears
creating singular words
or smells or sounds
that leverage a body response

hyperventilation, hives, blackouts, paralysis
the incapacity to form words, self-harm

the human body will make its journey
among pleasures and dangers
the child must be accompanied
by trustworthy human beings
but trust and love don't circumnavigate pain
pain is part of love
fear, the flipside of trust
but trust and love allow the child's body
to grow love and trust

WHERE THE GROWTH BEGINS

and the capacity to pass
them on