

ILDIKÓ BOLDIZSÁR

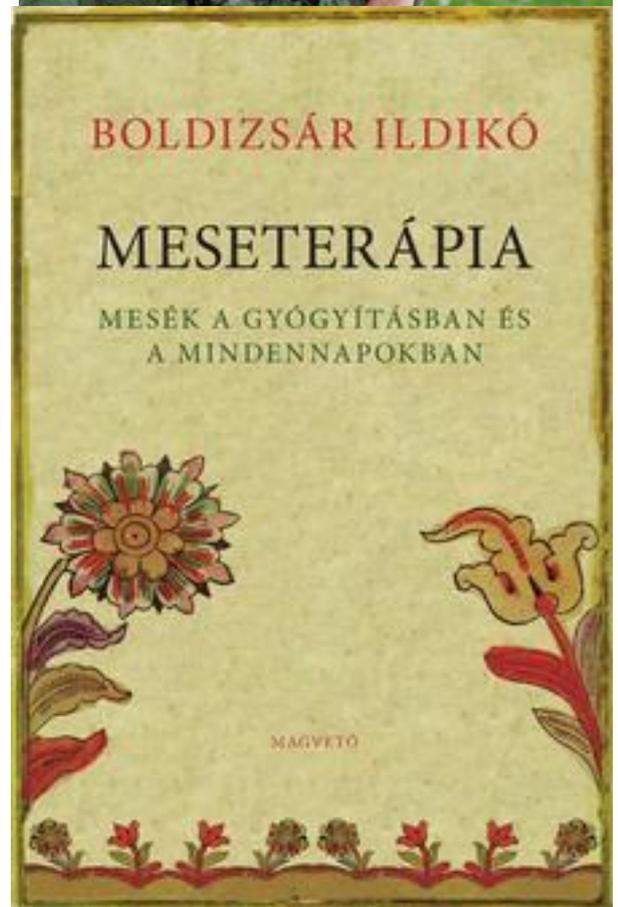
## FAIRYTALE THERAPY

2010, 368 pages

The Book of Ildikó Boldizsár is for those who understand or would like to learn about fairytales. Fairytales deliver the essence of life sanctified by tradition, which not only console and encourage us but are also capable of easing spiritual and physical pain. Following her previous selection of tales, which brought off big success, in this new book, the author explores the vulnerary secret of Fairytales and presents the results of her research in a remarkably bright and plain language. Her book entitled Fairytale Therapy leads us into the tradition of Fairytales, enlightens the ritual and historic roots of the community experience of Fairytales, the role of Folk Tales in passing on rules of social life, and presents in details the process of Fairytale Therapy, which is based on traditional wisdom – the Metamorphoses Fairytale Therapy Method – elaborated by the Author after a long period of in-depth research. Introducing the vulnerary effects of Fairytales, the Author presents examples from her own private practice and shares advices on how we can make Fairytales part of our everyday life. The book of Fairytale Therapy provides genuine final conclusions for both of its open-minded professional and non-professional readers.

„»It happened exactly the same way with me« – this is what I have heard many times from old people while listening to them telling Fairytales. Smaller children say: »I would like to be that brave (nice, skilful, true etc.) too! «. A patient expecting healing heaves a sigh like this: »I would like to live life, as it is in Fairytales«. The sad thing is that there are no Fairytale-telling community events anymore and Fairytales seem to be forgotten, which despoils us to set up a proper relationship with our own desires, capabilities, and intellectual roots. By means of these roots we could consider values, which are characteristic of not only a small community, but instead universal, the basis of our life.

**The book came out at the end of September, 2010,  
and has sold more than 3000 copies in the first 3 months.**



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ildikó Boldizsár was born in 1963 in Dunaújváros, Hungary. Between 1987 and 1993 she has been a researching fellow of the Hungarian Science Academy, doing a research of fairytales. She has received her doctorate of folklore in 1999. She has worked for more than twenty years as an editor, including being editor-in-chief at Magvető Publishing House (2003-2008), where she published five fairytale anthologies of her own: *Fairytales about men for women* (2007), *Fairytales about women for men* (2007), *Fairytales about mothers* (2008), *Fairytales about fathers* (2008), *Fairytales about life, death and rebirth* (2009). She is currently working as a fairytale therapist, and runs the world's first Fairytale Therapy Centre – opened on the 30th of September, 2010 – in the little Hungarian village called Paloznak. For more info please visit <http://www.mesekozpont.hu>

## FROM THE PRESS

*„An exciting, beautiful and interesting book, Fairy Tale Therapy is a serious academic must-read.”* – Népszabadság

[http://nol.hu/lap/konyvszemle/20101221-gyogyitanak\\_a\\_sarkanyok](http://nol.hu/lap/konyvszemle/20101221-gyogyitanak_a_sarkanyok)

*„People with mental illness (not necessarily aware of their problem) who read this book would throw out their pills, call off their esoteric counseling and rush to fairy tale therapy sessions.”* – Revizor Online

<http://www.revizoronline.com/hu/cikk/2830/boldizsar-ildiko-meseterapia/>

*„It was amazing to read how a such a seemingly simple thing as the fairy tale has a truly serious impact on the soul, and how accurately it reflects the various challenges we all have to face in our lives.”* – Ekultúra.hu

<http://ekultura.hu/olvasnivalo/ajanlok/cikk/2010-11-21/boldizsar-ildiko-meseterapia>

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Dankó u. 4-8. H-1086 Budapest, Hungary



## •FAIRYTALES AND BIRDS – ROOTS AND WINGS•

*Selected passages from the book*

*„There are two things children can get  
from their parents: Roots and Wings”*

J. W. Goethe

While writing my book on Fairytale Therapy I met a special couple, who made a decision to establish a Fairytale Therapy Centre in Hungary which operation is based on the Method of Metamorphoses Fairytale Therapy. At this time they were not aware of the fact that the Fairytale Therapy Centre in Hungary will be the first of this type in the entire world, since there is no other place where fairytales would play the key role in healing and also in preventing illness and behavioural disorders.

The intention proved to be so serious that the Fairytale Therapy Centre is opening its gates on the Day of Folk Tales, 30 September 2010, together with the publication of the book on Fairytale Therapy. It took nine month to give birth to both and during this time various epiphanies, experiences, ideas, and thoughts gave shape to words, sentences, buildings and our future colleagues. From the very moment when the Fairytale Centre became reality and within easy reach for us, new opportunities appeared for Fairytales, which we last had in the older times when Fairytales hold together communities.

The primary goal of the Fairytale Centre, as we defined, is to bring children and adults closer to their nearest and farthest environment, and also to their own selves through the knowledge reserved in Fairytales. By means of Fairytales we can show potential areas of opportunities for them, in which – no matter where and how they live – they all can get closer to their inner selves.

The goals of the Fairytale Therapy Centre by far means correspond to all what Fairytale Therapy can deliver in preventing illness and mental disorders. We believed more and more that our role is to establish an institution, which instead of healing, focuses on prevention, and thus can be unique by two means: methods are based on Fairytales, and the aim is prevention. The basic operation of a Centre, an institution differs a lot from a clinic, where clients arrive for private- or group-therapy. We must approach people who suffer from disorder of personal relationships in an absolutely different way than those whom we would like to prevent exactly from this type of disorders. This is the reason why we thought we would explore all possible means and opportunities which strengthen this type of 'protection'. We have been thinking a lot on how we can visualize values, messages, knowledge, symbols, pictures all over the Centre too, the same which appear in Fairytales and can be found around us in our daily lives as well. We have been searching for something which is not a Fairytale but can deliver the same: get things moving, uplift, make ordinary life and days easier and liveable, and present a model on how one can be much more than what he/she would think of himself/herself at a certain moment. At the same time – and it was also key for the founder couple of the Centre, who maintain its operation on a caritative basis, to link people back to nature and teach them how to gain strength from there for existence. Finally we are to find the meaning of the quoted sentence of Goethe. What does it mean: „There are two things children can get from their parents: roots and wings”? Many people quote and use this sentence, but we have never come across with any evidence of fulfilling this thought with any valid content.

What is usually meant under “Roots” is family background with stable values and “Wings” are considered to be the synonym of creativity most of the time. In our opinion this saying of Goethe means much more than family roots and self-fulfilment capabilities. We imagine “Roots” which can be found in a human being without any stable and supportive family background and “Wings” which can make all of us “fly” regardless of origin, education and the quality of life.

Roots and Wings according to our understanding are accessible any time and here for us to use in any circumstances and only dependent on the intention if one finds them or not, notices them or not.

We would like our guests to have Roots and Wings which nobody can take away from them, because despite of the fact that they cannot be possessed, they can be recalled any time in a 'back and forth effect' relationship. My practical experience in Fairytale Therapy made me think strongly, that Fairytales are Roots like this: accessible since centuries, and they are here for everyone with no property rights belonging to them. It only depends on the actual listener how much he/she would like to hear and learn from Fairytales. What is more, they can open codes in us, which they possess without anybody placing them there. What does 'Wings' mean in the sentence of Goethe? The answer here is easier than one can believe. Just look at the sky. For us, the first colleagues of the Centre, who in the past only dealt with people in therapy, it was homing pigeons wounded in a storm and landed in our garden, which made us understand the real meaning of Wings. One may say, they delivered the message and the solution, but of course not in their beaks.

Due to the smother and cruel storms devastating above Lake Balaton the house became crowded in a few weeks with wounded birds waiting to be healed (after-wisdom there is no surprise that they flopped down from the sky exactly right here). We had to ask for help and contacted one of the best specialists in the country. While I was watching the professional movements of the ornithologist, the wings and beaks of the birds regenerating quickly in his hands, and experienced the extreme vitality of birds and their never-ending desire to live. I saw their tireless hustle-bustle, I admired their lovely colours, I listened to them singing differently and beautifully, and slowly I also learnt how to communicate in their multi-colour language which reflects on every single change. “Birds are the most convincing evidence of existence” – as the doctor of birds quoted the American ornithologist, Peterson, and watching the birds healing so fast I had to admit that he was right. When we took the whole bird in hand and let it go and admired its explosiveness start, happy soaring and flying thank-you-arcs in the sky, actually we admired the existence itself, and lived through physically what Fairytales tell us in symbolic forms: the ritual of flying or uplifting to heaven. This ritual was extremely important for centuries in human history because it always embodied the opportunity of spiritual directions and freedom of mankind. A person longing to fly and to be uplifted to heaven has always been in a special situation regardless of his surroundings: he was to overstep borders. By means of crossing over borders he exceeded not only physical continuity, but his own barriers too, always knowing what he is targeting for in the meantime. Upwards.

Birds with their wings overcome inertia of substance, gravity and for this reason the symbol of transcendence, uplifting towards heaven and spirit. According to medieval thinking birds are “thoughts of God” in the temple of Heaven. A contemporary poet named them in his poem as the “Calligraphy of God”. All this show us that any time when man transforms to be a bird in his dreams, myths and Fairytales, or accompanies a bird as a fellow-traveller, it talks about his desire that he is ready for a rouser journey to Heaven to meet the Creator. Our beliefs on birds are the oldest images of mankind. In myths we find birds the most often for expressing congeniality with animals. In Hungarian Folk Tales it is always a griffin or a ‘táltos’ horse (a magic horse with wings) which carries through heroes in extreme situations. They resemble each other in having wings. It is recorded in history that the most ancient helpmate of man in Fairytales was always birds, and horse only appeared when they were domesticated. Thus a ‘táltos’ horse is actually nothing else than a universal aidant, the intercrossing of a bird and a horse, which always takes the hero to the exact place he would like to go, and what is more, a little bit even further. They hoard capabilities which are in close connection with intuition and instinct and with the help of which they can accommodate to any rapidly changing circumstances from decades. Besides their instincts they also have a very sensitive “instrument’ which researchers cannot detect until now. This is an internal and external compass, which helps them in orientation, in their pass, migration and return and also the capability to always find means of cooperation with each other and other creatures as well.

Fairy tale Therapy is written primarily to present what we can learn from Fairytales collected through centuries and underlying tradition. But how did Goethe want to give wings to children? He may have not only thought about the capability of flying behind the metaphor but also the real knowledge of winged creatures. What could this knowledge be? What can we learn from birds? What did artists of flying, the most convincing evidence of existence reserve for us? What effect can we make if we do not only examine a bird as a symbol, but we take it in hand and find contact points face to face? We have been searching for cultural-historic data for weeks; sometimes we lived among them or did bird-watching so that we can find answers for all these questions. When data and experience came

together and what is more we were over our first healing of a bird, we realized that the meaning of wings is far beyond the practice of soaring, uplifting and flying to the sky. In most of the traditions and spiritual heritage it is an ancient belief that at the very moment of death spirit leaves the body in the form of a bird, or spirit is delivered by birds to the world to come. Matching birds with spirit is well-known all over the world. The Foremother of shamans is conceived by a heavenly eagle, an eagle (the „Lord of Heaven bird”) which was the same intermedium between man and God as a shaman. White-headed eagle was honoured as the guard of the shaman. A shaman wore a bird-wing-shapen robe in the rituals, and among his totems and amulets we could find bones, feathers, pounces of birds (especially those of an eagle), which guarded and accompanied him in his earthly and heavenly journeys. In the Egyptian Book of the Dead it is a golden hawk which takes spirit to the otherworld. In the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh Eban met bird-shapen creatures in the underworld. The Dreambook of the Greek Arthemidoros talks about flying in dreams that it is nothing else but the intention of the spirit to leave the earthly bolt so that it can fly to Elysium as a bird.

In the ancient Rome when emperors died they released an eagle to take the soul of the emperor to Heaven. In Christianity winged angels bring and take souls. Many people are afraid of and dislike birds exactly because they do have some indistinct thoughts that birds have something to do with death and the world to come. What is more the demons of the underworld also took up human mind in the form of birds as forerunners of un auspicious incidences, but they do not know (and not even have suspicions) that birds interconnect man to vital force and energy too. Since a bird is not only a transporter of spirit, a carrier of soul, but an intermedium and messenger too, which can uplift man to Heaven but also take messages of God to him. Antique augurs saw signs of prophecy for future in the fly of birds. In German- Scandinavian mythology, birds were counterparts of God Odin: his two ravens - Ruminator and Reminiscent – delivered him secret pieces of information which others could not have access to. According to psychoanalysts birds represent “the invisible truth of unconsciousness” and since “they follow their own values without judgements reflecting ‘Self’, they are allegory of one acting in harmony with his/her internal truth an inner values.” Birds are flying in the sky in the world of spirits thus “they can be aware of hidden explanations and unintended thoughts they also share with us”. From mythological birds phoenix is the first one to pay special attention to. There is only one phoenix in the whole world, but this phoenix does not depend on either time or circumstances, since after its long life it ceases death with rebirth: practically recreates itself from its own remains.

This act of the phoenix makes it the symbol of resurrection and rebirth after death presenting a good example for us; when one has left nothing because everything split up into ashes in and around himself/herself, by means of an internal process: lightning fire (=the energy of spirit) one can start everything from the very beginning. Originally phoenix represented the constant divine force, which was the precondition of any kind of demonstration of life – natural or spiritual. In the phoenix bird it is God creating himself, thus it is considered to be the symbol of “self-creation”. The phoenix recreating itself does not defeat death in a single rebirth but it is capable to do it time by time, so we can look at it as the symbol of continuous rebirth. This is important because most of the people can only link rebirth with real death, though we must be reborn many times in our lives to be able to develop. Phoenix in China is considered to be a visible sign of heavenly mercy, the most sacred, the most immaculate and the brightest creature, which with its presence brings peace and enlightenment for mankind. The Egyptian benu-bird is the highest form of manifestation of God, the

messenger of eternity and light, which according to the Book of the Dead “defines what shall be and what shall not”.

Benu-bird is standing on the top of the „worldhill” and directs the cycle of existence and non-existence. Egyptians reckoned phoenix and benu as the bird of Sun, and expected their appearance time by time with a never-ending desire. In alchemy it is the pelican, which took over the role of phoenix. A pelican feeding its sons with his own blood is the symbol of Christ, and thus refers to the love-sacrifice of Christ. His seven or three cheapers stand for the Sevenspirit or the Holy Trinity. Another important bird of alchemy is the stroke, which has its nest on the highest branch of the Tree of Life, thus it directly receives God’s highest directions from which he can never diverge from and which he must pass on to others in all details. Now we may understand why the figure of the stroke is connected closely to birth and rebirth: it leads to a new way of life, a higher arrangement and form of a human spirit. Birds have an outstanding role in Fairytales, too. Most frequently they turn up to direct the hero from the usual way of approaching things to a different horizon of thinking, and invite him to a journey he would never set forth on his own. Firebird for example dribs the peculiar roses of the poor man every night and takes away who knows where. The sons of the poor man cannot reserve the roses, so they start off on their journey to find them. Birds in the Fairytales also turn up when it is to crown the kings mighty richness: it does not matter if he has everything and whatever he wishes, it is not worth a bean, if the singing-birds of the Worldfamous Nice Borica do not chant. Birds, “which are so glorious that one can look at them only through a seven-banded veil or they take his eyesight.” Birds of Fairytales are owners of secret information and knowledge: they know where to find treasures, the answers for tricky questions, the hiding place of the most beautiful girls and all the techniques which are needed to achieve the targeted goals. Understanding the language of birds is a special gift in Fairytales, but who owns that gift, gains initiation into the heavenly secrets. It cannot be a coincidence that various spiritual traditions connect understanding the language of birds with the talent of prophecy, and liken the language of birds to the proclamation of heavenly truth. Birds in Fairytales affirm one’s belief that he/she is also able to fly, that is to stay, uplift from earth and all substantial encumbrances of everyday life.

A lot of Fairytales have the motif of a broken-wing bird, or the wings of avian man are stolen. These Fairytales emphasize that the ability of flying is of vital importance. They do not teach us on how to continue life without wings but instead how to gain and grow new wings. If heroes of Fairytales reserved all knowledge of the “archaic man” he has ever been capable of, we have all the reasons to assume that birds in Fairytales also reserve the knowledge of “archaic birds” and all their capabilities, which according to the mythological examples above, man once thought possible to acquire. We are in a fortunate situation that everything which is possible to learn from birds is not only reserved in Fairytales but also by those real ones flying around and living with us. It means that we know birds not only as symbols but also as an opportunity to real experience. Birds kept many capabilities, which we may have also possessed long ago. Since they are always with us (exactly above our head); their beings are clear signs and signals for us not to forget about these capabilities we also had in the past. Understanding the meaning of these signs the colleagues of the Fairytale Centre decided to count on birds as well besides Fairytales. We set up an environment for them in a way that they can clearly and evidently show us all the essential aspects and beauty of their birdlife. There are birds which present samples of the fullness of existence: they feel themselves home on earth, in water and in the sky, and they find ways everywhere to be “at home”. Other birds show lightness, agility, cleanness,

beauty, brightness or self confidence to speak, but we can also take courses from them on trust, vitality, inspiration and accommodation to a changed environment.

There are ones which can be observed from the aspect of how they keep themselves in practice, how they ascend towards the sky, what advantages they have for being fit and fast, and how sophisticated communication channels they use to understand each other and all human beings. We believe that all these merits of birds are very important and to be followed indeed, but what we really want to teach our guests arriving in the Fairytale Centre is nothing else but the ability of orientation in space and time. If we spend a lot of time with birds we can observe their internal and external compass in operation, which defines their movements and homing. They use their internal compass to discover their own opportunities and once they recognized those they accommodate to the environment as fast as possible, of course in a way that they lose nothing from the essence of their birdlives. External compass is used by them partly to be connected to people, incidences who/which are around them, and partly they approach or diverge in between a distance of even 11-12 km. They promise us people their return so that we shall not be afraid of anything and can always count on their help. In the long run birds as lords of the air element manifest everything for us which are the opposite of the earth element that tightens us. On the contrary to inability, movelessness and immovableness, bird-flying warns us not to look down on earth if we really liked to fly.