

To get to this new world we need metaphors that don't make us into machines or anything literally physical. I once wrote a book about dark nights of the soul instead of depression, a word that easily points to a physical syndrome to be treated mainly with drugs.

Well, I'm sorry, but there is no such thing as a purely physical human being. Whether we like it or not, if we are breathing, we are emotional, spiritual, purposeful, and relational beings.

Rather than discussing my batteries, I'd rather talk about my feeling of being alive and awake and ready for life. Rather than finding a part of my brain that explains my experience, I'd rather speak of my soul and spirit.

By locating our experiences in the physical realm, we lose the possibility of meaning, and yet as human beings we survive with meaning. If my depression is "clinical," a matter of chemistry and brain, then it has no meaning, and I am a robot.

There isn't one new metaphor to keep us human but a way of using images that keeps our lives meaningful. In the past, people compared a human being to the night sky — vast, complex, and awesome. Nature images often work well: "I have an ocean of feeling." That's better than saying that I behave like clockwork or that I have the mind of a computer.

The metaphors we use create a climate in which we live. We could choose them thoughtfully, avoiding those that make us robots. It's time to make our machines more humane rather than making our humanity more machine-like.

Thomas Moore's newest book is *Care of the Soul in Medicine* (Hay House). See careofthesoul.net.

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