

Hello Class Members. I forgot to leave with you Tuesday evening a handout I had prepared about relationships. I am therefore posting it here. This handout links our discussion of the anima/animus with next week's topic of individuation. The reading for the Individuation class starts on the next page. I look forward to seeing you next week. (Monique, you were missed this week and Michelle, you will be missed next week.)

### **Relationship Work**

In his book, *Jungian Psychology Unplugged: My Life as an Elephant*, Daryl Sharp writes this about the process of individuating within a committed relationship:

You work on a relationship by shutting your mouth when you are ready to explode; by not inflicting your affect on the other person; by quietly leaving the battlefield and tearing your hair out; by asking yourself – not your partner – what complex in you was activated, and to what end. The proper question is not, “Why is she doing that to me?” or “Who does he think he is?” but rather, “Why am I reacting in this way? Who do I think he or she is?” And more: “What does this say about my psychology? What can I do about it?” Instead of accusing the other person of driving you crazy, you say to yourself, “I feel I’m being driven crazy – where, or who, in me is that coming from?”

It is true that a strong emotion sometimes needs to be expressed, because it comes not from a complex but from genuine feeling. There is a fine line between the two, and it is extremely difficult to tell one from the other without a container (which a committed relationship provides). But when you can tell the difference you can speak from the heart.

Work on yourself and a good relationship will follow. You can either accept who you are and find a relationship that fits, or twist yourself out of shape and get what you deserve. The endless blather that takes place between two complexed people solves nothing. It is a waste of time and energy and as often as not actually makes the situation worse. As Jung put it, when animus and anima meet, the animus draws his sword of power and the anima ejects her poison of illusion and seduction (pp. 71-72).

The next time your loved one misbehaves and fails to live up to the image you have of him/her, stop for a moment – right before all hell breaks loose – and ask yourself the great Buddhist question, “*Are you sure?*” Are you sure that what you think you see is what you see? Are you sure that what you see isn’t your own self, reflected in a mirror?

## Individuation

Individuation means becoming an indivisible whole, choosing and acting out of the completeness of who we are. It involves truly becoming an individual – unique and unlike anyone else, distinguished from what is collective. Being whole, or indivisible, entails embracing our individuality – those qualities and characteristics particular to us that set us apart from another.

The aim of individuation is nothing less than to divest the self of the false wrappings of the persona on the one hand, and of the suggestive power of primordial images on the other (Jung, CW 7, para. 269).

Individuation is not the same as individualism, which places individual interests above and outside the needs of the collective or our obligations to the collective. On the contrary, while the process of individuation requires that we leave the collective in order to sort out what is us and what is not us, it also demands that we return to the collective with the treasure we found through our personal journey. We are obliged to come back to society, to the family, to the professional collective, to the human community, and make our unique contribution.

As the individual is not just a single, separate being, but by his very existence presupposes a collective relationship, it follows that the process of individuation must lead to more intense and broader collective relationships and not to isolation (CW6, para. 758).

Individuation leads to a natural esteem for the collective norm (CW 6, para. 761).

Individuation does not shut one out from the world, but gathers the world to itself (CW8, para. 432).

Individuation has two principle aspects: in the first place it is an internal and subjective process of integration, and in the second it is an equally indispensable process of objective relationship. Neither can exist without the other, although sometimes the one and sometimes the other predominates. (CW16, para. 448)

Individuation and a life lived by collective values are nevertheless two divergent destinies. In Jung's view they are related to one another by guilt. Whoever embarks on the personal path becomes to some extent estranged from collective values, but does not thereby lose those aspects of the psyche which are inherently collective. To atone for this

"desertion," the individual is constrained to create something of worth for the benefit of society.

Individuation cuts one off from personal conformity and hence from collectivity. That is the guilt which the individuant leaves behind him for the world, that is the guilt he must endeavor to redeem. He must offer a ransom in place of himself, that is, he must bring forth values which are an equivalent substitute for his absence in the collective personal sphere. Without this production of values, final individuation is immoral and-more than that-suicidal. . . . The individuant has no *a priori* claim to any kind of esteem. He has to be content with whatever esteem flows to him from outside by virtue of the values he creates. Not only has society a right, it also has a duty to condemn the individuant if he fails to create equivalent values. (CW18, paras. 1095f)

Individuation is a process informed by the archetypal ideal of wholeness, which in turn depends on a vital relationship between ego and unconscious. The aim is not to overcome one's personal psychology, to become perfect, but to become familiar with it. Thus individuation involves an increasing awareness of one's unique psychological reality, including personal strengths and limitations, and at the same time a deeper appreciation of humanity in general.

The process of individuation, consciously pursued, leads to the realization of the Self as a psychic reality greater than the ego. Thus individuation is essentially different from the process of simply becoming conscious. The goal of the individuation process is the synthesis of the Self. (CW9i, para. 278)

In Jung's view, no one is ever completely individuated. While the goal is wholeness and a healthy working relationship with the Self, the true value of individuation lies in what happens along the way. 'The goal is important only as an idea; the essential thing is the opus which leads to the goal: that is the goal of a lifetime' (CW16, para. 400).

Lifted from *C. G. Jung Lexicon* by Daryl Sharp

Philosophers have shown interest in the *principium individuationis* since Aristotle, but only a handful of developmental psychologists have studied the phenomenon in the twentieth century, using such terms for it as 'self-realization' or 'self-actualization'. Jung's concept went further, however, because he viewed individuation as a biological principle evident in all living organisms and not restricted to human beings. 'Individuation', he wrote, 'is an expression of that biological process – simple or complicated as the case may be – by which every living thing becomes what it was

destined to become from the beginning' (CW11, para. 144). As with the archetypes themselves, he eventually came to believe that individuation was at work in inorganic matter as well – as when a crystal forms out of a hidden configuration within its preexistent liquor.

But as a psychologist, what fascinated him was what he saw as the highest achievement of the individuation principle – the human psyche in its fullest possible development. It is a creative act of Self-completion: a progressive integration of the unconscious, timeless Self (which Jung sometimes referred to as 'the two million-year-old man that is in all of us') with the time-bound personality of the contemporary man or woman. How does this extraordinary fusion occur? The answer is that it occurs in our sleep and that the process is immeasurably assisted if we record our dreams, reflect on them, and work on them.

Lifted from *Jung: A Very Short Introduction* by Anthony Stevens, pp. 81-82

### **Dreams and the Individuation Process**

The path inward is largely via dreams, which Jung described as 'the invisible roots of our conscious thoughts.' He told Laurens van der Post that he worked through 67,000 dreams with patients and helpers before even attempting to theorize about them. 'Dreams,' he said, 'are facts, specific expressions of our unconscious' which 'somehow make sense.' In them the unconscious is trying to become conscious. It uses symbols common to all mankind in an entirely individual way.

Dreams reflect many layers of our psyche. At surface level they can show personal contents that have been absorbed subliminally or pushed from the conscious to the upper end of the unconscious. They can also tell us more about ourselves, about other people or events. They can project forward as well as backward in time. From deeper in, new contents can arise revealing creative ideas or germs of future emotional conditions in our psyche.

Then there are the "big" archetypal dreams of the collective unconscious, often using symbols of a religious or mythological nature and numinously tinged. The meandering pattern of dreams, observed over a long period of time, reveals the gradual degrees of psychic growth that characterizes the individuation process. This inner growth then slowly emerges into conscious life as a fuller and more mature personality.

Jung famously said about the work of individuation, 'The opus consists of three parts: insight, endurance and action' (letter to Olga Frobe-Kapteyn). Analysis can help with the first; the other two can only come from the client.

Lifted from *Carl Jung: Wounded Healer of the Soul* by Claire Dunne)