



Applied Jung The Alchemy of Symbols

Introduction

Hello, my name is Anja. My co-facilitator, Max Machanik, and I, will be your guide on this journey through the magical and wonderful world of symbol work.

In this introduction I will give you a little background on Jung and his school of psychology, tell you a bit about myself, and introduce you to the concept of symbols. I will also cover the logistics, structure and content of the course and explain the process that you will engage with over the next five weeks.

Course logistics and structure

The course will run over the next 5 weeks, starting on Monday the 12th of March. Each Monday you will receive a Module from the Symbol Alchemy course via email. The email will contain the material for the week, consisting of a transcript of the podcast as a PDF file which will include the application (exercise) for the week. The podcast will be available on the Forum on the website.

Private Forum

The course is supported by a private Forum that is only open to those on this course. You will receive an invitation to join this group via email when you sign up. We strongly recommend that you join this group since we will make available additional material on this platform. This is also the platform where you can share your experiences, thoughts and any material that you may find interesting in terms of the course. There is no better way to learn than from another's experiences, so don't miss out on this unique and valuable opportunity.

If for any reason you do not receive the email invite to forum within 24 hours of registering for the course, please email me and let me know, anja@appliedjung.com



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Carl Gustav Jung

Carl Gustav Jung (1875 – 1961) was a Swiss psychologist and contemporary of Freud. Jung and Freud had a close friendship and collaboration for approximately six years before they had an acrimonious split causing a permanent rift in both their theories and their relationship. Jung's system called analytical psychology has some fundamental differences with that of Freud's. I am not going to elaborate on these differences here, but what is important to understand is that Jung realized that human beings need meaning for both their psychological health and the fullest realization of their destiny (individuation). Meaning is accessed or created by individuals and the language of meaning is symbols. In this course I am going to introduce you to the language of symbols, how they live through you, imbue your life with meaning, and we will explore the empowering nature of symbols together.

The Centre for Applied Jungian Studies

At the Centre for Applied Jungian Studies, we aim to empower and enable all of those who wish to access the transformational and empowering legacy that Jung has left us. We have translated the vast treasure of Jung's wisdom captured in the 20 volumes of his Collected Works, letters, seminars and Red Book into accessible, practical tools which you can acquire and use in your life. This course captures one of Jung's signature concepts in an applied modality in order for you to understand, assimilate and activate it in your own psyche and paradigm. You will never look at the objects in your house or the world around you in the same way again. You will find yourself engaging in dialogue with your unconscious and creating a gateway to your soul through the language of symbols.

I want to congratulate you on taking this bold step towards creating a meaningful life for yourself!



The Language of Symbols:

Symbols are the language of the soul, of the unconscious and the connection to the transpersonal aspect of yourself. Transpersonal referring to the aspect of yourself that is more than your ego. The symbol captures the essence of who you are and express your soul's desires and fears. Knowing who you truly are requires learning this language of symbols. Once you understand the soul's language, you can enter into a dialogue with your inner and most real or true self in order to actualize the most authentic expression of who you are in the world.

Symbols vs Signs:

To introduce the concept of symbols, the first thing to understand is the difference between a symbol and a sign. A sign contains information that is obvious, that is fully disclosed, for example any road sign, the points on a compass, chemical signs, mathematical operators, numbers, the names of streets on a map and so on. The information a sign communicates is fully explicit. Its meaning, to anyone able to read the sign, is clear and unambiguous.

Symbols on the other hand, always have an implicit dimension, they are frequently, and most importantly from our perspective, laden with unknown information. A symbol is highly subjective, in other words, something can be a symbol for you, but to someone else it could be meaningless. A symbol always evokes an emotion. Anything that we engage that brings us to tears or fascinates us or frightens us or evokes longing, hope or any type of emotion carries symbolic meaning. Anything can be a symbol for you, an object, a song, an animal, a goal, a story, etc. If you have ever had the experience of being swept away by a song or thought about a movie for days, or bought a vase because you just had to have it, it contains symbolic meaning for you. What this means is that the object represented something to you that is not obvious and explicit, but unconscious or implicit, your soul's desire, fear or fascination.

To use another example, let us reflect on an object of art. What makes a painting or sculpture good? What is the value in it? Why do you like a specific painting or sculpture? Perhaps it



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evokes memories and feelings in you, but how does it do that? Why do you like a certain piece of art whilst perhaps another does not?

Both Freud and Lacan favored language as the medium of unconscious communication, but Jung believed that the unconscious speaks in images. As mentioned before, Jung believed that the human being needs meaning in order to be psychologically healthy. Although Lacan's "symbols" were principally linguistic rather than image, he did understand the importance of symbols in relation to meaning. Lacan was both famous and infamous. He was a French psychologist and intellectual. Lacan would see his clients in the typical fashion of allowing them an hour per session, but in practice he would interrupt the client at any point and cease the session. When asked why he did that, he responded that he was waiting for, or later on when he became known for this technique – prompting, un-symbolized content to arise. What he meant by this is that what people are unable to process or accept, or any situations or experiences that they are not able to deal with, were un-symbolized and had no meaning. This absence of meaning makes the situation or issue that they are trying to deal with insoluble and this causes a rift in the psyche from which the individual is incapable of moving beyond.

This course will guide you through five steps that will help you symbolize your life, the issues that you are dealing with and create the meaning that is perhaps lacking. This may well cause you to be stuck, unhappy or confused about your identity and your purpose.

In Western society we place a lot of emphasis on reason (thinking) and consciousness, but placing emphasis on these qualities can lead to stagnation and calcification of your personality. Individuals often get stuck, unable to transcend their current situations or overcome obstacles; often they are plagued by unhealed wounds. Depth psychology offers a new way forward or a 'new ethic' as Neumann put it, a different way of relating to oneself and the world by introducing communication with the unconscious. Within the unconscious lies the possibility of a renewed future. Engaging with the unconscious through using the language of symbols, an individual experiences life as wondrous and mysterious, invigorating the psyche and imbued with hope, meaning and passion.



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A symbol acts as a bridge between the unconscious and conscious mind. The symbol represents unconscious content that is important to the soul. The symbol can arise from the inner world, for example from dreams, or from the external world, like a beautiful painting.

Experiencing and examining one's own symbols, allows the emergence of personal myth, and the unfolding of 'individuation', a term Jung coined. It means becoming who one is ultimately, ideally and most authentically.

During this course you will identify and engage some of your personal symbols, explore your own mythology and touch on the healing and transformational power of symbols. You will also learn how to achieve your goals in line with your soul's desires.

Module 1: Encountering Symbols in the World

This module will focus on exploring and interacting with the Symbols all around us.

Symbolic meaning is found in the external world through projection of unconscious content onto various objects. Objects here refer in the broadest sense to anything that you project onto, whether it is a person, a movie, a picture, a vase, a song, a company, event or anything really. When there is an emotional response to something, e.g. you really like it or you really hate it or it stays with you for days/weeks/months, this usually indicates that there is unconscious content within your psyche that has found meaning in that object. The object represents more than what it appears to be "objectively". There is something unconscious within you that you have placed outside of yourself because you have not taken conscious ownership of this idea/concept/belief/dream/goal.

During this first week you will be introduced to the concept and definition of symbols and why you are attracted to certain symbols. I will also explore the difference between signs and symbols and what makes symbols meaningful. This week's applications will allow you to understand and identify your own symbols and interact with them.



Module 2: Using Symbolism to amplify consciousness through unlocking Archetypal Structures

This Module will introduce you to the idea of the Collective Unconscious, Jung's signature concept and one of the main reasons why there was a split between him and Freud.

Jung said that universal human experience is shared and relayed through stories and myth.

Each of us are living our own myths, shaped through our own experiences and events in our lives. As a human being we are confronted by situations that are archetypal in nature.

Sometimes these events occur only once, other times repeatedly. Depth psychology attempts to help an individual to bring the unconscious influence and beliefs into consciousness. When we speak of depth psychology, in other words psychology that deals with the unconscious component in our psyches, we talk about therapy which addresses this unconscious component and its effects on an individual. Jung offers a way of exploring these archetypal patterns and experiences through symbolisation.

This module explores the myth and archetypal structures in your personal life. The applications for the 2nd week will allow you to identify a myth that lives in and through you and we will explore what this means in terms of your individuation and authentic identity.

Module 3: Working with Symbols to influence and effect goals

The third Module will focus on using symbols to realize goals that are in line with your authentic self.

This third function of symbolisation is the active engagement with your unconscious. Through this exercise you will receive symbols for specific goals or resolution of problems. This is not to be confused with signs. In other words, creating a symbol is not the same as the positive thinking approach to goal achievement e.g. making collages of your dream house or test driving the car of your dreams.



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This is treacherous waters and we will try to guide you through this process safely. Symbols take time to work so we hope that you have some successes by the end of the course and will share these with the group.

The application for this week will include the symbolization of a resolution to a problematic situation and setting a goal that you wish to achieve.

Module 4: Using symbols to heal experiences of loss and trauma

The fourth Module will introduce you to the healing power of symbols.

Symbols can play a powerful role in the process of healing and recovery. The human condition is littered with experiences of loss and trauma. Everyone will experience losing a loved one, or losing themselves or losing their health. That is inevitable. In this world nothing lasts forever. Yet, we are not prepared when it happens and we often have no idea how to process it. It certainly cannot be fixed by going on a weekend workshop.

We will introduce you to the transcendent function and guide you through this process via an active imagination. Symbols are teleological and move you into the future. Using symbols to heal trauma and loss is powerful and moving.

The application for this week will involve creating a transcendent symbol for healing.

Module 5: Living a Symbolic Life

Your last module will introduce you to the concept of living a symbolic life.

The Symbolic Life is an attitude, an approach to creating magic in your world. It involves the use of all the previous four functions and combining them to create your personal myth and imbue your world with synchronicity, symbols, wonder and joy.



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The Symbolic Life requires you to play with your reality, the stories you tell and the attitude you have. A healthy psyche is fluid and in motion. The Symbolic Life resists entropy and stagnation by breathing new life into your world.

The Symbolic Life is about changing your experience and expression in the world to one of courage and inspiration, choosing who you want to be and how you express yourself.

Rudolf Steiner said that man must complete him/herself. This is what the symbolic life is all about and we will share with you what this means in terms of individuation, creating meaning and communicating with your soul.

The application for this week will explore awareness and implementation of symbol work into your daily routines.

Conclusion

All of the above functions of Symbolic work will be discussed in detail in the course modules.

You will receive one module per week, which will include a podcast and a reading pack. The reading pack contains a transcript of the podcast, and applications. Please read the transcript of the podcast or listen to the podcast first before you attempt the applications.

Should you have any queries, please email me at anja@appliedjung.com.

I am very excited about sharing this process with you and I hope to meet you on the forum soon.

All the best

Anja