

THE SHADOW

DEFINITION OF THE SHADOW

The second developmental archetype is The Shadow. Shadow work, or integrating the Shadow is imperative to the individuation process. The Shadow is the parts of you that lie within the unconscious. Aspects that are dis-integrated, inaccessible, damaged, dysfunctioning, rejected, suppressed and repressed. It is all the parts of you that you do not want to acknowledge or face or have forgotten or never knew about.

WHAT IS SHADOW WORK?

Shadow work is the process of integrating all these unconscious aspects of yourself into your conscious personality. Shadow work is about becoming whole and the transformation is towards wholeness, not perfection. Shadow work is not about getting on top of yourself or being a better you or more productive, or more in control. It is a movement to become a unique and complete individual; a person with depth and personality; who you were meant to be.

WHY SHOULD I DO SHADOW WORK?

Shadow work requires courage and honesty. It is at times painful, but always liberating. When we repress or suppress memories, feelings and thoughts, it takes an enormous amount of psychic energy (libido) to keep it suppressed. This libido is then not accessible to the conscious personality, and consequently we are often tired, dulled and fatigued. Liberating unconscious content releases this trapped libido and re-invigorates the psyche.

Another benefit is that only through consciousness can we address these feelings, thoughts and memories and change our relationship to them. This change in perspective is the process of transformation. Whilst in the unconscious, we are powerless to transform these parts, but through consciousness, the unconscious content is brought into the light, processed, accepted, assimilated and the ego personality incorporates these parts into our identity. The advantage of shadow work is that the ego expands, and becomes more flexible, more compassionate. Self-acceptance and self-care develop naturally through Shadow work.

It is important to note that Shadow work is not only clearing out the debris and muck that lies within the unconscious, but also contains the potential of who we are and what we are capable of. True transformation is allowing the whole person to emerge from the swampland of the soul. Shadow work is turning lead into gold, and that is why Jung compared it to Alchemical practices.

It is essential to realize that everything that I experience is a projection of my internal reality. As you transform, your internal reality shifts and as a consequence your experience of your external reality changes. It is like Facebook. Facebook serves you more of what you look at, so your experience of FB is personal and tailored to your personality, likes and dislikes. When you do Shadow work, your

experience of the world changes, because you stop projecting onto external situations and people. As you integrate your Shadow parts, your world changes.

HOW DOES ONE DO SHADOW WORK?

Shadow work is achieved through working with our complexes, looking at dreams, projections, symbols and transference and counter transference. A simple guide to accessing the Shadow is by exploring your projections. That which we repress, we project out onto others. Whenever there is heightened emotion, e.g. repulsion, hate, desire, inspiration, love, we are in a state of projection. This simply means that there is something in the other person that is unconscious in us, that we place onto them.

AN EXAMPLE OF SHADOW WORK

There are many opportunities to do Shadow work. If you reflect on a movie, series or book you are currently watching or reading, this can give you a great opportunity to uncover something unconscious within you. There will be a character that you identify with, or one that you can't stand or one that you adore. If you reflect on the qualities of these characters, you will start to see aspects of yourself or your desires or parts of yourself that you do not like or even want to acknowledge that lives within you. A guideline to uncovering these qualities is to write down everything you think about these characters and then focus on the individual words. Then try to assess where that lives within you. Remember, the stronger the emotion, the more repressed this quality is within you. Again, I remind you that it takes courage and honesty to do Shadow work.

Video for week 8:

https://player.vimeo.com/external/329540906.hd.mp4?s=e857b9c1bda868164923db1967119988a5f01f6f&profile_id=174

Books:

[The Shadow and evil in fairy tales by Marie-Louise von Franz](#)

[Why good people do bad things: understanding our darker selves by James Hollis](#)

Articles:

<https://highexistence.com/carl-jung-shadow-guide-unconscious/>

<https://academyofideas.com/2015/12/carl-jung-and-the-shadow-the-hidden-power-of-our-dark-side/>

<https://appliedjung.com/the-dark-side/>

YouTube videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0qihjVfhuQ> (Marion Woodman)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Capl3z7VtA> (Jordan Peterson)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZ90jN2R9n8>

Topic for next week: The Shadow Development