

MODULE 12: INDIVIDUATION

The Conscious Living Program

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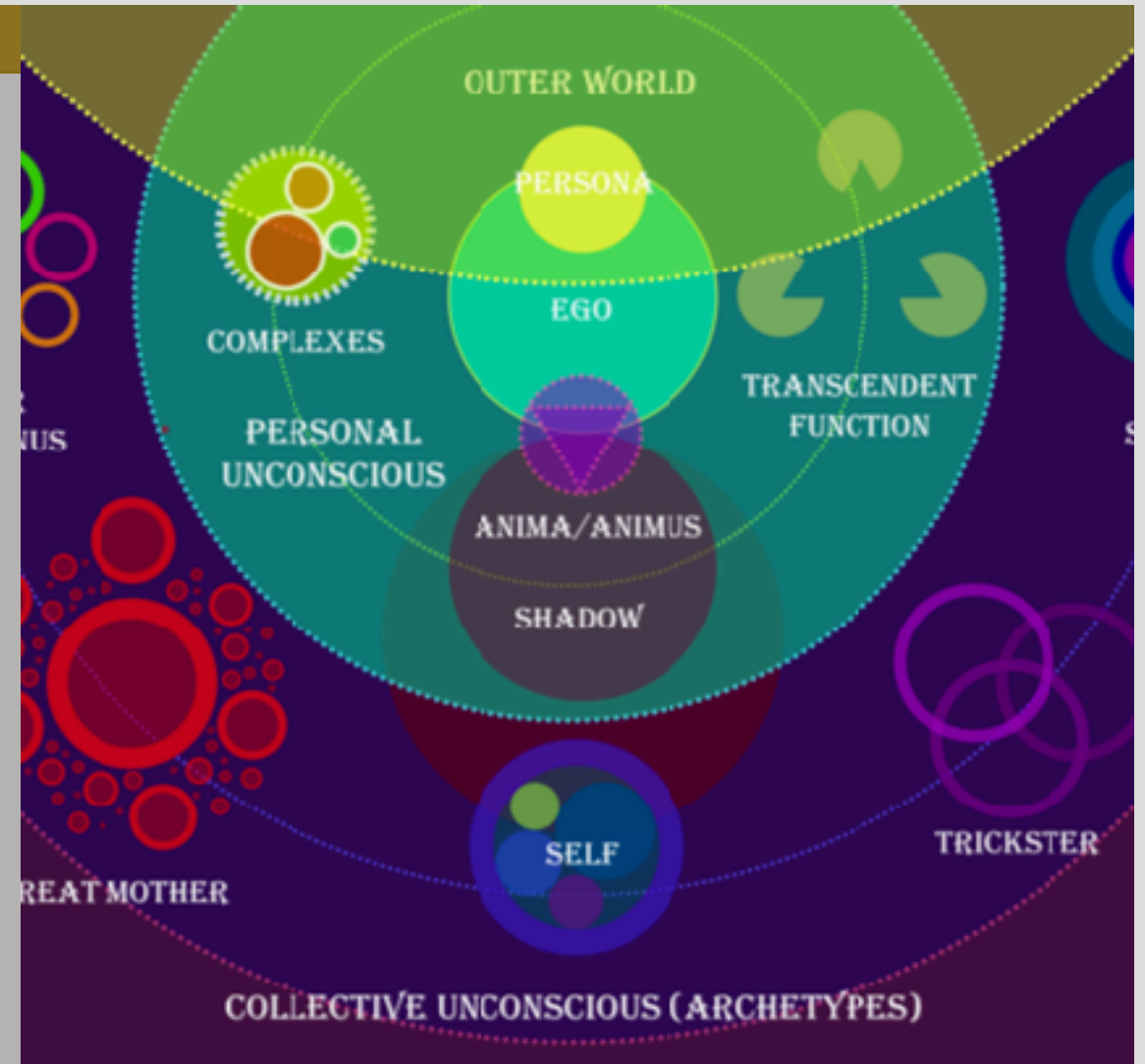


MODULE 12: INDIVIDUATION

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[Listen to the podcast.](#)



Quotes

Read the quotes below and reflect on what resonates for you or where it seems familiar. Capture your thoughts, ideas and associations in your journal.

By Soul I mean, first of all, a perspective rather than a substance, a viewpoint toward things rather than a thing itself. This perspective is reflective; it mediates events and makes differences between ourselves and everything that happens. Between us and events, between the doer and the deed, there is a reflective moment – and soul-making means differentiating the middle ground. (Hillman, 1975, p. xvi)

You have your way. I have my way. As for the right way, the correct way, and the only way, it does not exist.

(Friedrich Nietzsche)

The concept of individuation plays a large role in our psychology. In general, it is the process by which individual beings are formed and differentiated; in particular, it is the development of the psychological individual... as a being distinct from the general, collective psychology. Individuation, therefore, is a process of differentiation... having for its goal the development of the individual personality. (C.G. Jung)



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Concept

This is our final module in the Conscious Living Program. Last week we looked at how paradox and opposites play a vital role in the human psyche. This week we explore the concept of individuation as coined by Carl Jung.

The Idea

The main aspect of Jungian psychology that sets it apart from Freud's psychoanalysis, is that for Jung the psyche contains the potential for growth and healing. Freud and Adler both focused on the past and the resolution of neurosis by reflecting on childhood. Jung focused on the current situation and worked with the psyche to draw the patient into the

future and resolve their neurosis. The transcendent function plays an important role in this process. Jung coined the term individuation as a concept of this growth and potential of being. For him individuation is the process of becoming who you are meant to be, moving towards the Self and authenticity.

Authenticity

We live in a world of instant gratification and the quick fix. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, the main focus in western psychology, focuses on getting you to be functional in society. Coaching focuses on getting you to achieve your goals and "overcome" yourself.

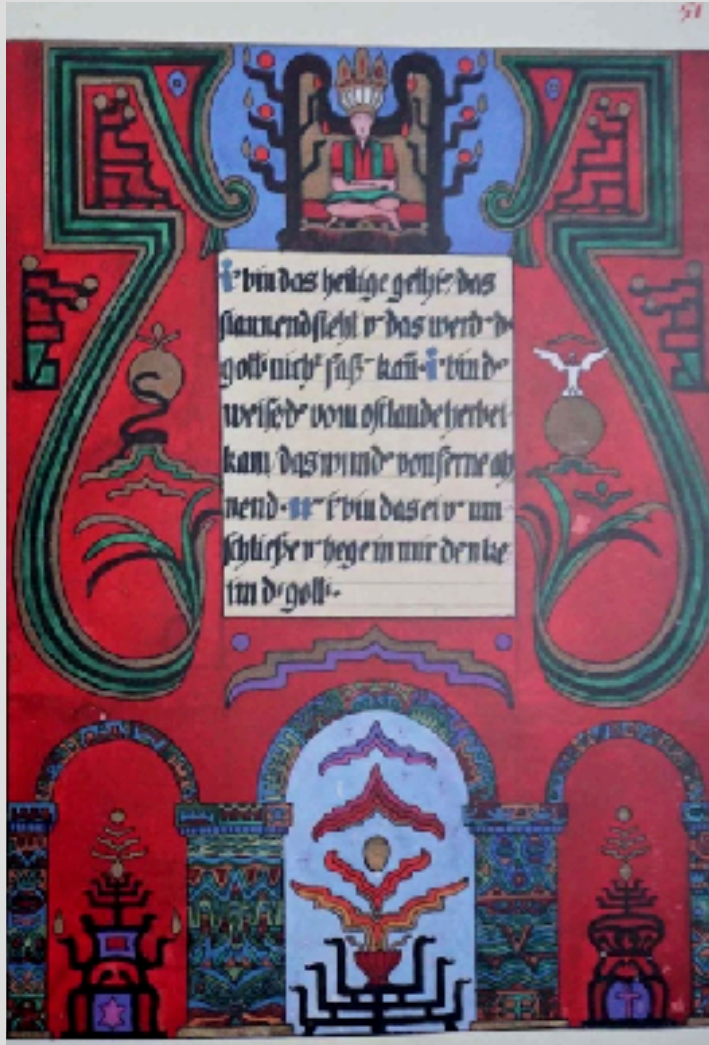
The overarching approach to many systems is to help you achieve, be better, focus more, get on top of yourself. But there is a paradox in this idea. If you are trying to be different (better), it is a movement away from authenticity. Being authentic is being yourself. Jungian approach is going inwards, to get to know who you really are, understand yourself on a fundamental level and develop compassion and understanding for the unique individual that you are.

The Persona

The persona develops by default because we are social creatures and want to belong.

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From the moment we are born, we adapt to the rules of our family. When we start going to school, we adapt to the rules of that system. As we grow older and integrate into our culture and society, we are bombarded with unspoken rules and regulations. We are taught and influenced: this is deemed correct behaviour and this is deemed unacceptable. We absorb these ideas like sponges. Your likes and dislikes are often a result of what you have learnt, and we accept that our thoughts are our own. It is only when we are confronted with a crisis or situation that directly contradicts what we believe that we find ourselves doubting our beliefs.

The persona is vital to survive and thrive in society. Even the rebel and nihilist have a persona. You just can't dodge that bullet. What is important is not to identify with your persona. You are not your persona. The process of individuation is separating what is collective (what was absorbed by you from your culture, society, family and peers) from your identity and become who you are, what you believe, what you stand for. But without sacrificing your persona. The persona is ultimately a tool with which to engage the world and allow the world to understand who you are.

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The Process of Individuation

Everyone can individuate. Life itself is a process of individuation. It is in our DNA. Everyone experiences crisis, the dark night of the soul, existential angst, facing our mortality, loss of faith and hope. These archetypal experiences force us to self-reflect. There are many paths to individuation. The Jungian process is but one of these paths. Jung was known as the cartographer of the mind (mapmaker of the psyche). His life's work has left us with a map on how to navigate ourselves and our minds. The Jungian lexicon in itself is powerful as it is a way to speak about the processes that are

happening within yourself. Once you learn the meaning of the terms shadow, complex, projection, Anima and Animus and symbols (to name a few), it is incredibly empowering. Individuation is not a destination but a journey. You will never individuate completely, but you will be on a journey towards being authentic. The tools that this course has taught you will help you on this journey.

Personal Responsibility

Individuation can also be seen as the process of growing up, maturing. One of the main factors in being an adult is taking responsibility for yourself and your actions. By default we are a blame culture. It is never my

fault, especially when a complex is triggered. We find ourselves the victims of other people's behaviour. Jungian theory helps us shift this blame perspective. Working with projection and complexes helps us realize that our world reflects what is happening within us. Being able to move away from blaming others is probably one of the most transformative processes. Whilst we are in blame mode, we are always the victim and reactive. When you shift over to taking responsibility, you are empowered. Only through conscious reflections can these dynamics change and bring about permanent shifts in relatedness to others and self.

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Rudolf Steiner said man must complete himself. I love this statement because it reflects the process of individuation. We must take responsibility for our own destiny, where we are going and how we want to exist on this planet. Through the process of individuation, we are able to identify what we really want and who we really are, and consequently live our lives to express those values. This is the true meaning of completing ourselves.

Parenting Yourself

We are complex human beings, literally and figuratively. Many of our complexes have been suppressed and repressed and have never been allowed to express themselves. This makes them infantile and childlike.

To help you individuate, it is important to understand that you need to parent yourself. This means that you need to guide, love, support and accommodate the complexes that live within your psyche so that they can grow up and become qualities that add value and meaning in your life.

Creating Meaning

Finally, I want to touch on meaning again and I will frame it in terms of Anima and Animus. The Anima is the archetype of life. She connects us with the collective unconscious and allows us to bring into awareness the symbols that are living in this realm that is filled with energy. The Animus is the meaning.

He takes those symbols and distills them into meaning, bringing them into the world where they are expressed and add value to both ourselves and society. Creating meaning is a function of consciousness and brings depth and color to our lives.

Individualism

Individuation is not the same thing as individualism. Individuation is about the balance between unconscious and consciousness, ego and Self, world demands and internal demands. It doesn't mean you must throw out the rulebook and live as you please. We have a responsibility towards both ourselves and society. Individuation is like the

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line on the Yin Yang symbol between black and white. This line is the Tao and that is where we need to walk our path of individuation.

Conclusion

I thank you for your participation on this course and hope that it brought you both knowledge and meaning and that you were able to integrate and assimilate the concepts.

The path of individuation is only for the courageous. It is not easy to take responsibility for yourself or self-actualize. I wish you all the best on this journey!

Be kind to yourself, love yourself and have compassion for yourself along this path that will be uniquely your own.

I hope to meet you along your journey again.

All the best

Anja



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Applications

As this is your final module, I would like you to reflect on your process over the past 12 weeks.

Reflect on the following questions:

Which module made the biggest impact on you?

- What aspects of the work have you been able to incorporate into your life?
- What do you think is the biggest shift you have experienced? Reflect on:
- Your relationship with yourself.
- Your relationship with an intimate partner.
- Your relationship with others. (you can choose relationships that have shifted)
- Your attitude towards God or similar idea.
- Your attitude towards the world.
- What are you most grateful for?

Finally reflect on the following questions:

What is your understanding of individuation?

How have you individuated over the past 12 weeks?

Where is your individuation leading you?



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Mindfulness Activity

Going forward I would like you to adopt an approach that is useful for the individuation journey. Whenever something happens during the day that triggers you, is interesting or thought provoking, ask yourself: Why this, why now?



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Links to Resources

SUGGESTED READING:

[JUNG, C. G. \(1981\). THE ARCHETYPES AND THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS](#)

[JUNG, C. G. \(2014\). PSYCHOLOGY AND ALCHEMY](#)

[GOLDBRUNNER, J., & GODMAN, S. \(1955\). INDIVIDUATION: A STUDY OF THE DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY OF CARL GUSTAV JUNG. HOLLIS & CARTER.](#)

[MCNEELY, D. A. \(2010\). BECOMING: AN INTRODUCTION TO JUNG'S CONCEPT OF INDIVIDUATION.](#)

[JACOBI, J. \(1983\). THE WAY OF INDIVIDUATION.](#)

YOUTUBE VIDEOS:

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=EZUGY0H15US&LIST=PLRIJEQFYMUNE4Z9H9SAYFKVZOFBTVP6UH](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZUGY0H15US&list=PLRIJEQFYMUNE4Z9H9SAYFKVZOFBTVP6UH)

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=BK-5V2VQDPI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BK-5V2VQDPI)

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=D9BLAFEN-MS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9BLAFEN-MS)

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=JN81LNMANVG](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JN81LNMANVG)

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=E1ORL4A_B5M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1ORL4A_B5M)

ARTICLES:

https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CBwQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.jungiananalyticpraxis.com%2Fuploads%2F2%2F1%2F2%2F4%2F21249684%2Findividuation_lecture.doc&ei=l1RrVZSqGPe_sQTx94KYDw&usg=AFQjCNHRleigH3TY1TNxCDWdj2L-BKGJoQ&sig2=UzTurAut9zU-EhaLZbWqTw&bvm=bv.94455598,d.ZGU (this will download into your downloads folder)

<http://www.cgjungpage.org/learn/articles/analytical-psychology/526-the-meaning-of-individuation>

<http://junginvermont.blogspot.com/2009/05/religious-function-of-psyche.html>



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