
MAGNUM OPUS

Citrinitas Module 1 The Four Steps of Transformation

Contents

Quick Guide.....	3
Alchemy	6
Nigredo:.....	7
Albedo:.....	7
Citrinitas:.....	7
Rubedo:.....	7
Lecture	9



Introduction:

In this first module of the Citrinitas stage of Magnum Opus, we will be exploring the 4 steps of transformation, a core component of Jungian and depth psychology. Jung described the process of transformation as being a four step process that includes Confession, Elucidation, Education and Transformation. These four steps are described by him in his paper Problems of modern psychotherapy which is featured in Volume 16 as well as his book Modern man in search of a soul. He describes the four steps of transformation relation to the process of analysis, but for our purposes we will explore it as a process that we can apply to making conscious all unconscious content.

Jung's initial studies into the Alchemical texts helped him clarify the four steps of individuation from which the four steps of transformation is derived. In Alchemy, the four steps include the Nigredo which is the purifying of the Prima material, The Albedo, which describes the process of getting in touch with your soul, The Citrinitas which describes the emergence of spirit and essence and the Rubedo, which describes the actualisation of the spiritual essence in the external world. The concept document contains more on this.

This module is important since the four steps of transformation, as well as the four steps of Alchemical transformation is the process that you will undergo on this programme if you apply yourself to the applications that we provide each month. Both of these processes focus on making the unconscious conscious,

1 <http://appliedjung.com>
<http://facebook.com/Appliedjung>



which is the thrust of transformation. Each month we provide you with detailed applications, and should you follow the process we ask of you, an enormous amount of unconscious content will surface.

It is important to journal your experience, and we suggest that you pen your journey in your journal. We also provide the Facebook private group page as a platform for you to confess and receive valuable input from other members as well as the facilitators. Please note that this is hugely helpful since we cannot see past our blind spots.

Quick Guide

Hello and welcome to the quick guide for the 4 Steps of Transformation Guide.

I think it would be correct to assume that you are on this programme to undergo transformation in one or more areas of your life.

Jung posited that transformation is a process and he captured this process in four steps. This month we will be looking at this four step process of transformation.

The four steps of transformation consist of:

1. Confession/catharsis

This stage is about the process of becoming conscious of and entering into catharsis. Separating and extracting the constellated content from the psyche.

2. Elucidation

This stage includes the process of illumination, amplification, association, creative imagination and symbolization of the problem.

3. Education

This stage incorporating the ego and persona in reference to the issue. Consciousness is used to interpret and understand the issue in the realms of both thinking and feeling, rational and irrational. Moving from a neurotic to healthy relationship with regards the constellated content.

4. Transformation

This stage re-imagines your relationship with the problem. The re-symbolization and assimilation of the constellated content. Moving forward in relation with the issue.

More detail on each step:**1. Catharsis / confession**

Before you can change anything, you need to know what it is that is not working for you. Identifying a destructive complex or pattern, or an area of relatedness that does not work for you, takes courage and one often needs to get to a point of severe frustration before one can admit that there is a problem. The process of confession/catharsis is a cleansing process. Ideally it should be with another human being, preferably a counsellor who is trained in the art of listening and creating a safe space in which to talk. But if you are not in this position, I suggest you pen your confession in a journal that is private or on a computer where you can password protect your file. Unburdening one's self breaks through personal defences and neurotic isolation and creates the possibility of change. To express your frustration, feelings, fears, emotions and disappointments allows you reflect on the problem. This reflection is of major importance if you are trying to change something. Whilst it is unconscious, the neurosis will overwhelm you and make you feel helpless, but the reflection allows you to objectify and quantify the experience and impact of the neurosis. This is of utmost importance in the process of transformation.

2. Elucidation



During this step, a process of analysis is applied to the neurosis. Memories and ruminations, fantasies and emotions are identified, explored. There is a process of investigation, using active imagination, free associations and other means to connect with unconscious content. In this process the tools from Jungian and depth psychology is utilised to explore parental and formative relationships, dreams, beliefs and paradigms related to the issue. Ties to unconscious processes are revealed and an awareness of this bring about a marked change in attitude towards the neurosis with a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the process.

Education:

During this phase of transformation, the process involves imaginative play with the problem and coming up with many solutions and options of dealing with the neurosis. Creative play allows you to imagine a new way of being and the energy that has been stuck and repeating itself in the neurotic dynamic is now allowed to move forward, gaining momentum and freedom.

Transformation:

Although this is the last step in the process, huge transformation has already occurred at this point of the process. You have by now brought into consciousness an enormous amount of information regarding this neurotic dynamic. Your understanding and attitude towards this problem has shifted. You are starting to believe that there is a possibility of different way of being and you see the problem with much greater clarity than before. You have changed your relationship to the problem as well as your perspective on the



issue. The final step in the process is the actual physical expression of your changing dynamic. This final step requires action in the world. The work that you have done in the first three steps could already have had a real impact on your reality, or it may take much longer to manifest. Transformation is a process that takes place on an unconscious level and the change required for a change in reality sometimes takes a while.

Alchemy

Jung also used the alchemical process to describe personal transformation, with extensive research and writings on Alchemy. As the alchemist's attempts to transmute lead into gold, the human being goes through an analogous process of becoming conscious of unconscious content and eventually becoming individuated – a term Jung coined that describes a state of wholeness and being the most authentic expression of yourself.

We find the crucial importance of self-knowledge for the alchemical process of transformation expressed most clearly in Dorn, who lived in the second half of the sixteenth century. The idea itself is much older and goes back to Morienus Romanus (7th-8th cent.), in the saying which he wrote on the rim of the Hermetic vessel: "All those who have all things with them have no need of outside aid."

Jung, C. G. (2014). *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*. Routledge., p. 166



The four stages of transformation/individuation from the Alchemical symbolism area clear analogue with Jung's four stages of transformation

Nigredo: The blackening. This process involves the burning away the dross, seeking the "Prima Materia", the original, pure, uncorrupted matter. This is symbolic of a rebirth, and fire is a critical element to achieve this. In psychotherapy this stage is represented by facing the Shadow. This stage refers to a blackening of mood, a depression, the 'dark night of the soul'. The process of internal conflict and facing one's undesirable qualities is intense and confrontational. This fire burns away the misconceptions, self-criticism and guilt. It is the death of the previous identity, creating the possibility of the birth of a new self.

Albedo: The whitening or emergence of the soul life. During this phase there is a withdrawal from the world and intense reflection on the direction and purpose of the individual's life. The soul rises from the psyche and its essence is extracted. At the end of this stage, there is a heightened spiritual awareness and purpose.

Citrinitas: The yellowing or rising of the sun. This stage is the coagulation of all that has been brought into consciousness and prepares the individual for Rubedo.

Rubedo: The Reddening. The spirit that was freed in the previous stage needs to be united with psyche again. The spirit that has been awakened now needs to be expressed appropriately and more authentically in the life and work of



the individual. This is the stage of adjustment and re-alignment with authentic goals and purpose.

Conclusion:

The above four steps of transformation can be applied to any problem area in your life. Whether you are experiencing conflict at work, or whether you are not able to motivate yourself to do something all can be addressed and resolved through this process.

Lecture

This guide differs from the other modules on the Magnum Opus programme, in that instead of dealing with a specific element of psyche such as archetypes, complexes, anima, animus, ego, shadow, persona, self, and so on, we will be focusing on the process of transformation that Jung outlined. Every module that we present is informed by and seeks to follow this particular process. However, that process is typically implicit rather than explicit and we thought that there would be some value in making the process more explicit. This is a meta-process and should inform and guide all of your work to come on future applications.

What that means is that unlike the other modules on the program, there is no specific content that you are going to be given to deal with in the application. Rather we are showing you the process of transformation as outlined by Jung and you can use it to work with any content that seems to be appropriate for you. Obviously anything that has come up in any of the previous modules or content that you will work with in future modules or simply any content or aspect of your life that you would particularly like to apply the transformative method to, which presumably by virtue of the fact that you're on the program, you have.

During the course of this lecture, I'm going to introduce the concept to you and take you very briefly through the four stages of transformation as outlined by Jung and then the analogue that he uses or that inspired his four steps, which



are the four steps of alchemy, of chemical transmutation. Please don't be concerned about these rather dense terms. They sound a lot more complex than they are. I'll take you through the four steps of transformation and hopefully make it very clear for you. And then I'm going to share a story where we see the transformation process happening. I'm going to take a story from popular culture, specifically from a television series by the name of 'True Detective: Season 1'. Many of you may have seen it, but if you haven't seen it, I would highly recommend it and I'm briefly going to show you how the transformative process is acted out in the narrative of that story.

I think that it's probably best in this case to start off with the alchemical process that inspired Jung's four steps and to say something briefly about them. For Jung and for his model of individuation, the seeds of that possibility and of that process lie within us and that really was the focus of Gnostic alchemy. Before I get into that though, let me take a step back and say something about the alchemical process as it originally existed and as it was practiced as a very early form of chemistry, if you will.

The idea behind alchemy really was the transmutation of base worthless metals into valuable finer metals, specifically the focus was the transmutation of base metals such as lead into something such as gold. The idea was that through an alchemical process, through a process of continually refining the base metal in the alchemical furnace or the Athanor, and by putting it under pressure, as it were, that it could be refined and its essence which was seen as a purer or higher metal such as gold, would emerge and this was known as the philosopher's stone, Gnostic alchemy was the application of this chemical,

mechanical, material, alchemical process to the unfolding of the alchemist himself, of his own spiritual process and of his own process of coming to know himself and coming to know The Divine.

Jung saw in alchemy an analogue for his individuation process and he was very impressed by the fact that alchemy constituted a sub-terranean parallel to the explicit exoteric Christian process. It was the Gnostic parallel or analogue to the exoteric Christian process of transformation. The alchemical process is typically described using three or four steps. In this particular case I'm going to focus on four steps, so that it maps better onto Jung's four steps of transformation and the four steps that the alchemical process of transmutation involve were the Nigredo (black), the Albedo (white), the Citrinitas (yellow/green) and the Rubedo (red) and I'll say something about each of those processes.

Remember that the process then was a transubstantiation of a base metal into a refined or higher metal, which of course is a very good analogue for the individuation process or for any process of transformation and the idea, beginning with the Nigredo was that it started with a base metal such as lead, or with a common stone, as it were, something that was typically cast aside, that was seen as not having any value, that was trodden underfoot, and this was known as the 'prima materia' (the primal material), the original substance and in psychoanalytic terms, of course, this is the problem. This is the neuroses or the wound or the pathology as it initially presents itself and this was, metaphorically speaking, the Dark night of the soul.



Following Nigredo we have the Albedo, which is the whitening or the first, very first stage of consciousness. This is the 'waking up', from the sleep of consciousness or the sleep of the soul. From there follows the Citrinitas, which is the yellowing or the rising of the sun and the rising sun is a symbol of mystical experience and contains the aspects of revelation. It can be in many forms, but it's experienced often as a vision, big dream or an intuition or truth. So in psychoanalytic terms, this is the process of illumination and of education, or recognizing the truth that is contained in the constellating situation or in the wound and then finally the Rubedo, which is the fruit that becomes ripe now. It is the reddening or the ripening and it is the coming to fruition of the work that is done in the Nigredo, the Albedo and the Citrinitas. This is the transformative process wherein the gold or the philosopher's stone is produced.

Those four processes then, the Nigredo, the Dark night of the soul, the Albedo, the whitening of coming to consciousness, the Citrinitas, which is the refinement of the previously coarse material by truth or intuition or some sort of vision. There is some type of awakening and the illusory aspect of the original constellating content is recognized and then finally, the transformative process or the ripening of the Rubedo as a fruit of your labours, or of the labours of the Gnostic alchemist, but hopefully in your case that will be you.



Before I unpack the four stages of transformation let me read you a quote, from Jung, from Collected Works Volume 16, he says:

“Analytic psychology is defined as embracing both psychoanalysis and individual psychology. This approach includes four stages, confession, elucidation, education and transformation. Each of these stages is subsequently analyzed. In the first stage, the secrets or inhibited emotions, analogous to repressed sins that lead to neurosis must be confessed to enable the patient to regain his wholeness and his dependence on the doctor. Transference must be severed.

Next, the elucidation of this transference must take place and the patient’s fixation analyzed. The importance of drawing the patient out of himself in the process of education in order to attain normal adaptation is stressed. The fourth stage, transformation is seen to affect both the patient and the doctor whose personalities have interacted throughout the treatment. Emphasis is placed on the doctors need to engage in self education. To understand that both he and the patient are in search of the cure that involves not just the body, but the entire psyche.”¹

¹ General problems of psychotherapy. Problems of modern psychotherapy. In: Jung, C., Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol. 16. 2nd ed., Princeton University Press, 1966. 384 p. (p. 53-75).



So Jung then gives us these four stages which, as I said, are analogous to, and I think inspired by the four stages from Gnostic alchemy. The four stages that he gives us are confession, or catharsis, elucidation or amplification, education and ultimately transformation.

Just to repeat the analogue again, in the alchemical process we have the Nigredo, the Albedo, the Citrinitas and the Rubedo and in Jung's four stages of transformation we have the confession or catharsis, the elucidation, the education and the transformation.

Let me say something briefly about each of these four steps. The confession is very much in line with the way it sounds, it is really the process of speaking, of confessing, of coming to terms with, of admitting, of facing, as it were, whatever the content is. So of course, the image, the classical image that we have in our collective psyche of this is the confession in Catholicism, the confession that happens, the sacrament of the confession in the Catholic church is when a member of the congregation, one of the believers confesses his or her sins in the confession to the priest and that image is a very illuminating of what we mean when we talk about the first stage of the transformation process as being confession. Of course in psychoanalysis this is typically the confession of the patient or the analysand to their master confessor who in that case is of course the psychoanalyst, but it's this process of not repressing, but of admitting and of facing one's sin, so to speak. Of course sin, in psychoanalytic terms can be understood as neuroses or as a psychic wounding. It is the content that is causing the distress and that one needs to come to terms with. So that is the first process, the confession.

From there the process of elucidation or amplification is the process of putting flesh on those bones, as it were. So it's looking at the context of the content, what is the context that this issue arises out of, what are the associations that you have with the issue. What is it that you imagine is held in this or what does it mean, where is it going. So it's a process of recruiting the feeling and the imaginative aspects of the psyche to elaborate and to illustrate and to describe in as much detail as possible, what the essence, what the meaning and what the phenomenal body, as it were, of the confessed content is, but the significance of this process can hardly be overstated. This is something that many of you may be familiar with, is this is the process whereby dream interpretation proceeds. So one has the original dream content, the bare bones of the dream, of the narrative, as it were and the process of engaging with that dream content or that fantasy material always starts off with this process of elucidation or amplification, what are the associations, what comes up for you, what is the context, what is the meaning, what are the feelings, thoughts, imaginations and fantasy associated with the content.

From there we go onto the process of education and education is, in the psychoanalytic sense, this is to some degree, the intervention of the psychoanalyst who acts as the voice of the reality principle to perhaps educate and to help the analysand recognize certain elements of the content that are maybe principally based in fantasy and that are not in accord with reality. It is a process of education. It's a process of understanding what the phenomenon looks like at an objective rather than a purely subjective level. In terms of



engaging in this process on one's own, which is what is certainly the case for most of you on this program, I would think, or at least those that are not working on a regular basis with some sort of psychoanalyst or counselor, it is a process of starting to recruit the ego and the rational function and to critically evaluate the content that is being produced. You see, in the psychoanalytic setting, the psychoanalyst stands in for the ego. When one is engaging in this process on your own, it is your ego and your critical thinking function that needs to be recruited to constellate the reality principle and bring about a process of self education.

Through these three processes the fourth process emerges, which is the process of transformation. So the process of transformation is, as it were, an emergent property that emerges spontaneously out of the other three processes when they are sincerely engaged with, but the process of transformation, in as much as it is an active process, is a process of then re-imagining oneself and re-imagining what was originally presented in a transformed and rehabilitated light.

So that very briefly then are the four steps of the transformative process in a Jungian psychoanalysis, confession, elucidation, education and transformation. These are unpacked, both in the concept document and also in some detail in the application that you would have received along with this month's module pack. Also during the course of this month we are going to focus on each of these steps, one at a time, during the course of the four weeks of this module.

I do, however, want to say something more about this and I thought it would be useful to share a story with you that is a story of transformation, and although it may not map perfectly onto the four stages, I do think that it maps onto them pretty well and it is a useful story, take it out of the abstract and allow me to give you an example of what we're talking about when we talk about the transformative process.

The story I want to share with you as an example of the transformative process is, as I mentioned, the TV series 'True Detective' that aired in 2014, that was created and written by author Nick Pizzolato. It's the first season, specifically, of the series that I'm going to be talking about and it follows a pair of Louisiana state police detectives, Ruston Cole, played by Matthew McConaughey known as Rust, and Martin Hart, known as Marty, played by Woody Harrelson and their pursuit of a serial killer over the course of 17 years from 1995-2012.

To give you the context of the story, in 2012 two homicide investigators of the Louisiana state police criminal investigation division summon Rust and Marty to question them about the Dora Lange murder investigation of 1995 and they haven't seen or spoken to each other since an altercation concerning Martin's wife, Maggie Hart over a decade before. With many of the old files being destroyed in Hurricane Rita, the two men are asked to recount the history of their working relationship, personal lives and the Dora Lange murder investigation as well as a series of other related individual cases as new evidence suggests that the perpetrator remains at large. So the story is told from, in this sort of context of these two detectives, Rust and Marty, being interviewed and obviously cutting back to the stories that they are telling. Just



as a sidebar, the British philosopher Nick Land called 'True Detective' the most intelligent TV series in history. I don't know if it is that, but it certainly was very good and provides a nice example, as I say, a nice metaphor for the transformative process.

The story focuses on the relation of these two stereotypically masculine men to the feminine principle. Both men, Rust and Marty each in their own way suffer from a disconnection to the feminine. In Jungian terms, in other words they experience disconnect from the anima, or soul. Rust is made to suffer by virtue of his ex-wife and deceased daughter and Martin is unable to deal appropriately with the women who are there in his life. Rust, whose character is a hardcore nihilist, brilliantly acted by McConaughey, experiences himself as abandoned by the feminine after the death of his daughter and his subsequent separation from his wife and Marty is unable to conceptualize a relation to the feminine, which is beyond that of sexual objectification, a kind of pubescent relation to the feminine, in other words.

The symptomatic consequence of this absent or displaced relation to soul manifests self symptomatically in both men's lives. Rust descends into cynicism to the point of nihilism, alienation and profound sadness. He's only able to operate in the realm of reason, the masculine function and unable to access his feeling function, which is frozen as a self defense mechanism because of the immense pain of losing his daughter and wife, which he's been unable to assimilate, or come to terms with.



In Marty's case, his inability to access a more mature relation to the feminine sees him growing further and further apart from his wife and daughters, indulging in serial infidelities, in an increasing desperation to reconnect with the feminine and he anaesthetizes himself throughout this series with his chronic alcoholism. Actually both men are alcoholics, initially Rust resists this, but finally gives in to it as well.

This situation presents us with the wound, going back to the alchemical metaphor with the alchemical Nigredo, the Dark Night of the soul, the stone in the shoe, so to speak, this is the constellated content that needs to be confessed, there needs to be engaged with if any healing is to be possible. This is the essential distress and archetypal situation that calls for rehabilitation through transformation and as it always is with life's most profound challenges, in particular the experience of loss, there is no going back. There is no point of return, despite I wish that there were. These situations always demand of us that we move forward, that we obey, in Jungian terms, the teleological imperative.

Nothing will bring back Rust's family and Marty, despite recognizing the destructive force he's become in his own family, and his life, cannot by will alone transcend himself. What is required is a coming to consciousness and awakening so that the scales which blind them may fall from their eyes. Like all great hero myths, they need to face the dragon. To be faced with a dilemma that takes them beyond their narcissistic, self centered perspective into a meaningful engagement with the world. Individuation does not happen in isolation, but happens when we live in the world and when we engage with the



archetypal processes that we are called with to enter and grapple with and as is the case with such things, the dilemma is directly related to the wound. Their collective wound is this displaced relation to the feminine.

What our two True Detectives are faced with in the story is a brutal, inhumane serial killer. A beast who preys on the helpless and the vulnerable. A man who has become so inflamed with his own masculine power that he's quite literally become a monster. He represents, in manifest form, this is important, he represents in manifest form what lies latent in both of our intrepid heroes. A corruption of the masculine principle and it's relation to the feminine which starting at alienation taken far enough, leads to madness. A condition that we are all regrettably too familiar with in the history of the world and with the litany of power mad dictators of the savagery is being given us by their madness. In contemporary times, this is also the underlying archetypal issue at play, in the total disregard of the biosphere and the ruthless exploitation of all natural resources, not least of which are human beings themselves.

In the story this coming to consciousness, the Albedo, the whitening in alchemical terms, or the very first stages of elucidation in the four step model is presented with Rust and Marty being assigned to investigate the murder of Dora Lange. In the narrative timeline, this is 1995, although fortunately not always as dramatic as murder, there is something valuable to be learnt here. Coming to consciousness is usually not pretty. It involves facing something quite ugly and having the courage to look it in the eye. In Jungian terms, of course, this is facing the shadow. This is what it means to become conscious,



not to avert your gaze, not to regress into the uncomfortable comfort of the wound or neuroses.

Consciousness imposes the demand for a change in relation, a shift in perspective and it is the first and critical step in the evolutionary process towards transformation. What our two detectives, Rust and Marty have to face when they face it, commit themselves to the investigation of the Dora Lange murder is their own destructive capacities and symptomatic acting out of their own displaced relation to the feminine, which each detective acts on destructively.

Marty's destroying or murdering his family, with his pubescent sexual attitude and Rust is murdering the whole world with his nihilism. Two quotes capture this quite nicely, both from Rust. In the recognition of their own evil, Rust answers Marty's question. Marty asks him: Do you wonder, ever, if you're a bad man. To which Rust answers: No, I don't wonder Marty, the world needs bad men, we keep the other bad men from the door. Though that sounds good in the spirit of the sort of machismo parley, upon reflection it's obvious logical flaw becomes apparent. The only reason there are bad men at the door, of course, is because bad men exist. In other words, the only reason there is a need to protect against bad men is because there are bad men, they create their own need. A little bit like the old and bad joke about protection money. The men you are paying to protect you, protect you against themselves, they create their own need.



The other quote also from Rust epitomizes the nihilistic attitude. This time in relation to his daughter's death where he says: I think about my daughter now and what she was spared and sometimes I feel grateful. The doctor said she didn't feel a thing, went straight into a coma, then somewhere in that blackness she slipped off into another deeper kind. Isn't that a beautiful way to go? Aimlessly as a happy child? The trouble with dying later is you're already grown up, the damage is already done, it's too late.

The ongoing process from the four steps of transformation are the elucidation and education or in alchemical terms, the Albedo and the Citrinitas, take place over the following 17 years. Space and time prevent me from unpacking this in detail, the detail of the narrative in any case, and you'd probably be better off watching the series than having me repeat it to you step by painful step. That said, briefly, it is the process whereby Rust and Marty become increasingly committed to finding the monster who is responsible for the murder of Dora Lange and countless others. In this process there is much conflict, to the point where they are completely alienated from each other for a period of a decade, I think, before finally reuniting in the determination to complete their mission.

In the process though, most of their bullshit is exposed for what it is, a facile, narcissistic defense and each man pays dearly for his shortcomings or his own wound. They are educated by Freud's reality principle and their entire relationship is an extended confession. They finally turn a corner though, when after a false dawn is exposed, not uncommon in the transformation process when a premature and false revolution is exposed. Many years before they catch the actual killer they are misled into believing they have already caught



the culprit, which brought great honors to the two men, but it turns out to be the wrong man, although fortunately also someone no less deserving of justice, but when they do finally reunite, each man has discovered in himself a sense of humility and purpose.

Their defining purpose becomes tracking this monster and they commit themselves to it absolutely. Their lives are now led in service of the self archetype and not dictated by their wound and all of this is the process of education, essential for transformation to occur.

I'm going to resist sharing the finale with you, for those who have not yet and would like to watch the series, I do recommend it, but what I will conclude with is by saying that each man finds redemption in his own way and one which restores the relation to soul that was the initial presenting condition. Both men find redemption, not by going back, or even by dealing with the issue in its presenting form, but by re-imagining themselves through the redemptive process, which results in profound transformation and ultimately wholeness.

With that, I'm going to leave you to get on with the application this month and I certainly hope that you will engage with the application as much as time and energy allows and beyond the work that you do on the application. In applying these four steps of transformation, this is making explicit the underlying principle that informs the work we do every month and I trust that this guide and making this transformative process explicit, will be valuable to you.

I wish you all the best and we'll chat again soon.

Adieu,

Stephen.