

# THE SACRED MARRIAGE

## Module 1

### THE PERSONAL ANIMA AND ANIMUS

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	3
CONCEPT	3
QUOTES	11
APPLICATIONS	14
REFERENCES	16

## OVERVIEW

During this module we explore Jung's classic version of Anima and Animus, as he identified in his practice. We will look at the concepts of the internal other, as well as how Jung placed working with the Anima and Animus in the individuation process. It is important to understand that Anima and Animus are rooted both in the individual consciousness and the collective unconscious, and therefore function as bridges between the personal and the impersonal, the conscious and unconscious.

This module explores our personal Anima and Animus imagoes, and how that affects our relatedness to the other.

## CONCEPT

### ORIGINS

The idea of Anima and Animus developed from Jung's actual practice experience. At the time that Jung was actively working with clients, the world and gender roles were very different than today's experience of men and women, their sexuality and gender roles.

Jung realized in therapy sessions that men who were very masculine had underdeveloped feeling and relational abilities. Classic masculine tendencies, e.g., reason and logic, were dominant in these men, but their relational qualities, like emotional relatedness, intuition and feelings, were repressed. These men were usually in relationships with women who contained and carried those expressions of the feeling life freely. It was as if the man carried some qualities and the woman carried others. Together the couple contained all aspects of the human experience, a well-developed feeling life and a well-developed intellectual life.

Unfortunately, this resulted in men who were severed from their own feelings and consequently frequently moody, sulky, childish, threw tantrums and generally were not able to access and process their own feelings. Women, on the other hand, were unable to access an understanding and clear thinking about the rules and structures in the world, and often relegated this function to their husbands.

## ARCHETYPAL QUALITIES

These clinical encounters, among other things, made Jung realize that there are archetypal masculine qualities and archetypal feminine qualities. He named the feminine archetype, containing all feminine qualities, the Anima and the masculine archetype, the Animus—from the Latin terms for soul or mind.

His theory posits that in all men there resides an internal image of Anima, an internal contra-gender soul (not religious soul), and that in all women, there resides an internal image of the Animus. This internal image is projected out into the world and finds a suitable individual

who can carry those qualities for us, and then we experience feeling whole, being at one with the other. We usually call this “falling in love.”

If you reflect for a moment on the various individuals that you have had romantic relationships with, you will realize that they frequently contain similar qualities, indicating that there is a “type” of person that you are attracted to with specific qualities. This is your internal image of the “other” or “opposite” which lives within you. Integrating Anima and Animus is accessing these qualities that lie within you and bringing them into consciousness.

The Anima and Animus are archetypes, and as such bivalent in nature. This means that they have constructive and destructive qualities. Both these constructive and destructive qualities are projected onto romantic partners. Typically, initially only the constructive qualities are visible and acknowledged, but as time progresses, the destructive qualities start to emerge, often causing great distress to the partner who is in projection—literally, generating “animosity.” This is why sometimes you might realize that you are always attracted to the same type of person, even if you try to consciously choose a different partner.

Somehow, they eventually display the same type of behavior that you find unpalatable or unacceptable.

The positive aspect of the Animus expresses spirit, philosophical and religious ideas, in particular: meaning. It allows for the practice of reflection, deliberation and self- knowledge.

The psychological function of projection is the realm of the Anima. She creates the illusions of our internal world being represented in the outer world through projection. She animates, so whenever you experience a movement in psyche such as an emotional response, or

psychosomatic response, it is the Anima who is activated. Jung said that if the products of the Anima are assimilated, digested and integrated, it has a beneficial effect on the growth and nourishment of the soul. By products, he means psychic activity such as dreams, fantasies, visions, symptoms and coincidences (synchronicity), as well as feelings (affects). The Anima governs relatedness to self and the other.

The functions of the Anima and Animus cannot be separated. They are in constant ebb and flow. One can liken them to a spiral, where the Anima takes us inward and makes us aware of our projections, and the Animus takes us outwards, and makes us reflect and integrate our realizations.

Jung used a variety of alchemical symbols to express these dynamics, e.g., Anima as Eros (relatedness) and Animus as Logos (thinking), or Anima as toad and Animus as eagle.

## INDIVIDUATION

Jung's primary interest in the Anima and Animus is that they are aspects of ourselves that we need to integrate in order to individuate. Just as we need to integrate our shadow content: withdraw it from the world and internalize it, so too we need to internalize our Anima and Animus. As long as we project our shadow and Anima and Animus onto the world and others, the possibility of individuation and the move towards wholeness is inhibited since parts of ourselves are divested in others and expressed externally to ourselves. As such, naturally we are not self-contained and remain psychologically dependent on the objects of our projections.

For Jung there were, very broadly, four stages in the developmental process of psychological wholeness with each stage respectively engaging with one of the primary archetypes of the psyche he articulated. In sequence these are the ego, the shadow, the Anima/Animus, and then finally, the Self.

We project our inner Anima or Animus onto our intimate or potential partners. The psyche wants to experience wholeness, so it will attract to itself that which lies within the unconscious.

Sexual attraction is always a good indication that this specific person carries the qualities of your own inner Anima or Animus. Usually, we identify our persona with a specific archetype, i.e., we are either more Anima or more Animus in our Ego identity, so the projection onto the other is the opposite, the internal contra-sexual identity. Importantly, just to clarify, this is not gender specific, so men could be more Anima and women could be more Animus. For example, a woman with more Animus qualities would attract a man with more Anima qualities and vice versa.

This is also true for people in the LBGTQ community.

## THE IMAGO

The imago plays an important role in what your Anima and Animus look like. According to Jung, the imago is based on your parents and develops by the age of four. The imago is an internal image of mother and father. When you are a baby/toddler, the mother and father are like gods, they are everything to you. Their behavior, attitude, perspective, and interactions with you form an internal image of what they are like. This is only partially based on reality and most of it is

created by the archetypal imagination.

This affects our relationship to the concept of a higher power (God) as well. If mother or father were cruel, God will be perceived as cruel as well. All our love, admiration, resistance, hatred and rebelliousness still vest in the imagoes of our parents. Even when your parents are long gone, the image remains and affects the way we relate to others through projection. Some relationships can trigger these dynamics in the transference and countertransference dynamics. This is most well documented, but not exclusive to, the analytical relationship. The problem with imagoes is that they predetermine attitude and experience of the other. It creates an area of illusion in our relationships and relatedness. As the persona faces the external world and becomes adapted to society, the Anima and Animus imagoes face the internal world and become the internal lens through which we relate to the world and others.

The parental dynamic has a profound impact on your relationship dynamics. The partners that you attract will reflect these dynamics as these are part of your shadow complexes.

These parental dynamics, and the wounds that we carry from them, will revisit us in our relationships. The shadow is projected out onto the romantic partner, and they carry this dynamic for us. The same dynamics that you experience with your parents will start to become apparent. For example, if your mother or father were emotionally distant, chances are that you will find yourself in a relationship with an emotionally distant partner.



## SHADOW ANIMA AND ANIMUS

Our image of Anima and Animus (our imago) is projected out onto our partners, friends, boss, colleagues etc., but most significantly our romantic partners. Initially it is almost a godlike projection. They are wonderful and you feel you know them. But as time passes the less desirable qualities emerge, which are not so wonderful. Human beings are bivalent in nature, we are all good and bad rolled into one. The idea that you are going to meet the perfect partner is not realistic, and the imago is made up of both constructive and destructive qualities, which are projected onto the partner. Working with the shadow Anima and Animus involves figuring out what qualities the other is carrying that live within you, and then integrating them into consciousness. To use an example, if you keep finding yourself attracted to narcissists, there is a narcissist living in you. Maybe not to that extreme, or that specific version, but some aspect of it, perhaps entitlement (if you have a lack of it). Only you can figure out exactly what it is. The imago that you project can also be either/or a combination of your parents' qualities.

Integration of the Shadow Anima and Animus requires the same process of Shadow work, which involves identifying these qualities, and finding where we express them within ourselves. It is important to note that projection does not necessarily mean that we have that quality we projected, although we often do. It is also often the case that it was this quality that caused the wound. In this case, Shadow work would entail making conscious the experience of this wound, the effect and influence it has on our relatedness to ourselves and our beliefs about ourselves, and making these aspects conscious.

It is practically impossible to integrate the Anima and Animus on your own without a partner. Unless you have a mirror in the form of another in front of you to reflect these unconscious qualities, it is very difficult to access and work with them. As romantic relationships are wrought with baggage from both sides, this is difficult and challenging work, but well worth it. Relationships are an essential path to take in order to integrate the shadow aspects of Anima and Animus. Again, I need to reiterate that not only the destructive aspects, but also the constructive aspects of the internal other, need to be integrated.

Finally, it is also important to note that your experience of Anima and Animus is personal. Although there are archetypal aspects to this from the developmental archetypal perspective, your specific expression of these archetypes will be a result of your innate images of Anima and Animus, combined with personal experience of these archetypes through your earliest caregivers.

## QUOTES

*If, therefore, we speak of the anima of a man, we must logically speak of the animus of a woman, if we are to give the soul of a woman its right name. Whereas logic and objectivity are usually the predominant features of a man's outer attitude, or are at least regarded as ideals, in the case of a woman it is feeling.*

*But in the soul, it is the other way round: inwardly it is the man who feels and the woman who reflects. Hence a man's greater liability to*

*total despair, while a woman can always find comfort and hope; accordingly, a man is more likely to put an end to himself than a woman. However much a victim of social circumstances a woman may be, as a prostitute for instance, a man is no less a victim of impulses from the unconscious, taking the form of alcoholism and other vices.*

(C. G. Jung Vol 6 par 805)

*Among all possible spirits, the spirits of the parents are in practice the most important, hence the universal incidence of the ancestor cult. In its original form it served to conciliate the revenants, but on a higher level of culture it became an essentially moral and educational institution, as in China. For the child, the parents are his closest and most influential relations.*

*But as he grows older this influence is split off; consequently, the parental imagoes become increasingly shut away from consciousness, and on account of the restrictive influence they sometimes continue to exert, they easily acquire a negative aspect. In this way the parental imagoes remain as alien elements somewhere “outside” the psyche. In place of the parents, woman now takes up her position as the most immediate environmental influence in the life of the adult man. She becomes his companion; she belongs to him in so far as she shares his life and is more or less of the same age. She is not of a superior order, either by virtue of age, authority, or physical strength. She is, however, a very influential factor and, like the parents, she produces an imago of a relatively autonomous nature—not an imago to be split off like that of the parents, but one that has to be kept associated with consciousness. Woman, with her very dissimilar psychology, is and*

*always has been a source of information about things for which a man has no eyes. She can be his inspiration; her intuitive capacity, often*

*superior to man's, can give him timely warning, and her feeling, always directed towards the personal, can show him ways which his own less personally accented feeling would never have discovered. What Tacitus says about the Germanic women is exactly to the point in this respect.*

*Here, without a doubt, is one of the main sources for the feminine quality of the soul. But it does not seem to be the only source. No man is so entirely masculine that he has nothing feminine in him. The fact is, rather, that very masculine men have —carefully guarded and hidden—a very soft emotional life, often incorrectly described as “feminine.” A man counts it a virtue to repress his feminine traits as much as possible, just as a woman, at least until recently, considered it unbecoming to be “mannish.” The repression of feminine traits and inclinations naturally causes these contrasexual demands to accumulate in the unconscious. No less naturally, the imago of woman (the soul-image) becomes a receptacle for these demands, which is why a man, in his love-choice, is strongly tempted to win the woman who best corresponds to his own unconscious femininity —a woman, in short, who can unhesitatingly receive the projection of his soul. Although such a choice is often regarded and felt as altogether ideal, it may turn out that the man has manifestly married his own worst weakness. This would explain some highly remarkable conjunctions.*

(C. G. Jung Vol 7 par 296-297)

*The “soul” which accrues to ego-consciousness during the opus has*

*a feminine character in the man and a masculine character in a woman. His Anima wants to reconcile and unite; her Animus tries to discern and discriminate.*

(C. G. Vol 16 par 522)

## APPLICATIONS

The applications are the spine of this course and process. You have sufficient time for all the applications in this series, two weeks per Module applications, so take your time and do them in as much depth as possible. If your time is limited, only do the Application for Week 1.

### WEEK 1

Reflect on your favourite character from a book, movie or TV series. Write a paragraph or more describing the character. The physical appearance, the attitude, the archetype you think it captures, the obstacles and triumphs the character faces. Share on the FB Forum.

## WEEK 2

To identify your own Anima and Animus, we turn now to modern myths, in the form of film and literature. The characters can be real or fictional. It is these mythological characters: stars, protagonists, antagonists, characters, even villains, in respectively the masculine or feminine form, you are going to work with imaginatively in the following application.

1. As the Anima and Animus are archetypes, the characters that will capture them will have a fascination that is not quite explainable. They will be the objects of fantasies and projection. Write down a list of 3 Anima (feminine) and 3 Animus (masculine) characters that you find magnetic and fascinating. These do not need to be only positive. We may be attracted to characters that are deemed not desirable.
2. Once you have captured these characters, reflect in your journal what you think and feel about each of them respectively.
3. Distill these three descriptions into one overarching description for both the Anima and Animus respectively, i.e., you must end up with a single description for Animus and a single description for Anima.

4. Do a creative activity to express both your Anima and Animus. It can be a poem, collage, drawing, painting, sculpture or anything that captures the essence of your Anima and Animus in a concrete and creative way.

## REFERENCES

### BOOKS:

Collected Works Volume 7 by C.G. Jung (Anima and Animus)

Collected Works Volume 9, part 1 by C.G. Jung (Mother archetype and complex)

Collected Works Volume 17 by C.G. Jung (Marriage as a psychological relationship)

Anima and Animus by Emma Jung

### ARTICLES:

<https://carljungdepthpsychologysite.blog/2020/03/19/carl-jung-on-anima/>

<https://carljungdepthpsychologysite.blog/2020/09/08/marriage/>  
(Marriage as a Psychological Relationship – Anima & Animus)

### YOUTUBE VIDEOS:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZN47s0mPfRU> (Jung)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exqL4C2u7HA> (Jordan Peterson)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHgPZ-CEAvk> (Jungian Psychology,

Anima and Animus, Archetypes)