

The second way we will look at the process of transformation is through the eyes of Carl Jung, one of the central leaders of modern psychology. While not overtly and openly spiritual, all readers of Jung know how spiritual he was. One of his proteges, Robert Assagioli was perhaps the only openly spiritual psychiatrists in the world. I will add a couple of notes after each section below.

Steps of the Individuation Process

*In Jung's terms, the individuation means the realization of the [Self](#), which is the conjunction of the conscious and the unconscious. In the practical accomplishment of this goal, the interpretation of the dreams plays a dominant role because dreams are the expression of the [unconscious](#), both of the personal and of the collective one.

Steve: I believe that inclusion of the soul, which is distinct from the conscious and unconscious is critical as we try to find the Self.

A few terms will be helpful moving forward:

*The Collective Unconscious

The collective unconscious is an important concept in the psychology of Carl Gustav Jung. The collective unconscious is shared by us all. This means that it is present in each of us, a vast reservoir of the archetypes of the whole of humanity. It is accessible to everyone. In general, the collective unconscious consists of characteristics that many people have in common and which each of us inherit at birth. Fear and happiness, for example are inherited human characteristics. They arise without conscious motives but simply arise from inner necessity.

These archetypes are the result of the many experiences of life that repeat themselves: sunrise and sunset, the seasons, life and death, food, danger, and so on. They are symbols for the experiences of mankind.

The content of the archetype is basically unconscious. It undergoes a transformation when it becomes conscious or when it is being perceived. The way it is transformed depends on the state of consciousness of the individual in which the archetype has arisen.

An archetype is experienced as image and as emotion. It is especially recognizable in such typical and important human situations as birth and death, adolescence, extreme fear or a fearful experience. During such life phases and experiences archetypes will often appear clearly in dreams.

The form of the archetype is only partially determined. Its content is a primal image that can only be given form when it is has become conscious, and thus has become filled with material from the conscious.

Thus archetypes, when becoming conscious, will shape themselves, for example in myths and fairy tales, depending upon the cultural background of the people. A fairy in Europe, for example will be dressed in medieval or renaissance clothing, while in the East it will wear ancient Eastern clothing and be more djinn like of appearance. The underlying content, however, remains the same wherever you go. Archetypes are like a frame. The frame remains the same, but the image that appears inside the frame will be dependent upon the circumstances.

Archetypes cannot be brushed aside. They will always manifest. When a society undergoes a change its manifestations of the archetypes will change too. They get another form, another image in the frame.

Archetypes by themselves are neutral, without value judgments attached to them, but they can be interpreted in a positive, negative or neutral way.

Steve: Again, personally I differ from Jung. I believe the Collective Unconscious is coordinated by the Holy Spirit, using the images to draw us to wholeness and God. The Holy Spirit works in part through our unconscious and dreams because we are too distracted during consciousness to pay attention.

The Persona

The Persona is the mask we all wear, a mask that pretends individuality. It makes us believe that one is a certain individual, but it nothing else than a well played role. The persona is a compromise one creates between himself and the community about how one appears to be. One adopts a name, a title, an occupation, and identifies oneself with this or that. One thinks that one is a businessman, a good father or a misfit, but all this are masks, ways we would like to be or appear to other people and does not always reflect who we really are.

The Persona is a complicated system for connecting the individual consciousness with society. One could call it a mask that makes an impression on other people, but also hides the true nature of the person. It partly results from the demands of a society that one has to play the role that has been ascribed to him. In your profession you need to fulfill the demands of that profession as well as possible. A society demands this as a sort of security measure. From a shoemaker is expected that he repairs shoes to the best of his abilities, not that he is a poet. It is not even wanted that he is a poet, because then society thinks that he is not totally reliable as a shoemaker. In academic circles, a similar person would be regarded as a dilettante, in politics he would be considered as unreliable, in the religious area he would become a free-thinker. As soon as one deviates from his role, he becomes a suspicious person, despite the fact that he might still be an excellent worker in his profession. Therefore, if one wants to make it in society, one can only devote himself to one single thing. Of course, few people are able to do this, as we all have more than one interest. To accommodate to the wishes of society, we create a mask, a Persona. What is behind that mask we call 'privacy'.

This split in our behavior is not without consequences. If we neglect the development of the Persona, then people might find us insulting or they make our lives difficult, because they expect us to behave in the way society demands. At the other side, there is danger of identifying too much with the role that one is trying to fulfill.

The Shadow

The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge, and it therefore, as a rule, meets with considerable resistance. Indeed, self-knowledge as a psychotherapeutic measure frequently requires much painstaking work extending over a long period. (From Aion: Phenomenology of the Self

Carl Jung: Thirteen Quotations on the Shadow

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Aion (1951). CW 9, Part II: P.14

Filling the conscious mind with ideal conceptions is a characteristic of Western theosophy, but not the confrontation with the shadow and the world of darkness. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.

“The Philosophical Tree” (1945). *In CW 13: Alchemical Studies*. P.335

Unfortunately there can be no doubt that man is, on the whole, less good than he imagines himself or wants to be. Everyone carries a shadow, and the less it is embodied in the individual’s conscious life, the blacker and denser it is. If an inferiority is conscious, one always has a chance

to correct it. Furthermore, it is constantly in contact with other interests, so that it is continually subjected to modifications. But if it is repressed and isolated from consciousness, it never gets corrected.

“Psychology and Religion” (1938). In *CW 11: Psychology and Religion: West and East*. P.131

We know that the wildest and most moving dramas are played not in the theatre but in the hearts of ordinary men and women who pass by without exciting attention, and who betray to the world nothing of the conflicts that rage within them except possibly by a nervous breakdown. What is so difficult for the layman to grasp is the fact that in most cases the patients themselves have no suspicion whatever of the internecine war raging in their unconscious. If we remember that there are many people who understand nothing at all about themselves, we shall be less surprised at the realization that there are also people who are utterly unaware of their actual conflicts.

“New Paths in Psychology”

The Shadow represents unknown or little known characteristics of the ego. When one tries to see his Shadow, he becomes conscious, and often ashamed of, the characteristics and impulses that he denies in himself but sees clearly in other people: for example: egotism, spiritual laziness, unreal fantasies, intrigues, indifference, cowardliness, greed, and all those little things of which we say "Oh, it doesn't matter. Nobody will notice, and besides other people are doing it too". The Shadow is the inferior being in all of us, it wants to do all those things that we do not allow ourselves to do, or that we don't want to be. It is the Mr. Hyde in relation to Mr. Jekyll. The Shadow is not only about not doing something, but also about impulsive and ill considered deeds. Before you have time to think about it, a nasty remark slips out, leaving you confronted with the result of something that you didn't really intend. The Shadow is all those uncivilized desires and emotions that are incompatible with the norms of society and with our ideal personality. It is all we are ashamed of, that we do not wish to be.

When a person joins other people, he automatically feels the need to behave as they do in order to be accepted. Thus, he suppresses more of his tendencies, and thus makes his Shadow bigger. The Shadow can also be a collective phenomenon in regards to the whole of humanity, like the devil or the witch.

While it is necessary to have a certain degree of suppression of one's characteristics in regards to one's role in society, the Shadow, remaining the unconscious, will increase in strength. When a moment arises that the Shadow must appear, it can be so powerful and dangerous that it can overwhelm the personality. It shows, for example, when one suddenly gets very angry. It certainly is true with the collective Shadow, when a mass of people is protesting and apparently innocent people turn violent.

In dreams the Shadow appears as a person of the same sex as the dreamer. The Shadow does not have to be an opponent. As it is a part of ourselves we need to take it, give it love and compassion, control it, guide it. The Shadow will only become hostile when it is not understood or is neglected.

The Anima

"There is in the unconscious of each man an inherent image of woman who helps him to understand her being."

The anima is the personification of all female psychological tendencies in the psyche of a man, including feelings, moods, intuition, receptivity for the irrational, the ability for personal love, a feel for nature, and the man's attitude toward the unconscious.

This image becomes conscious by real contacts with women, especially the first woman he encounters in his life. Normally this first woman is his mother, who is the most powerful in shaping him. There are men who have never been able to free themselves from her fascinating power. A man's experience of his mother is of course subjective. How she behaves is less important than his experience of how she behaves. The image he builds is not an exact representation of how she really is, but it is colored and shaped by his inherent ability to produce an image of her, that is, his anima.

If man has the feeling that his mother has had a negative influence on him, then the anima will often be expressed with irritating, depressive moods, insecurity, a feeling of being unsafe, and touchiness. This negative anima can be expressed in nasty, effeminate remarks, with which he demolishes everything possible. Another anima trick is pseudo-intellectual dialogs which prevents a man from feeling life closely and coming to real decisions. He thinks so much about life that he cannot live, and he losses all spontaneity and the flow of life.

Without a healthy anima, a man becomes effeminate, or becomes the prey of women, and he is not capable of handling the difficulties of life. Such men can be very sentimental or touchy.

When he is grown up his image of the anima is projected onto the women that attract him. It is then that a lot of misunderstandings arise, as most men are not aware that their projection does not correspond with who the woman is in reality. This is the cause of a lot of strange love affairs and divorces. Unfortunately, this projection does not happen in a rational way. It is not that a man is actively projecting, but that the projection happens to him automatically.

Because the anima is an archetype, she has characteristics that continue to appear throughout the ages. She has a quality of eternity. Often she looks young, although she has the feeling that she already has years of experience. She is wise but not overpowering. She often has the feeling of being special, or having a secret knowledge. She is often connected to the earth or water and can have great power. She has both a light and a dark aspect. She can be the pure, good, noble figure, almost a goddess, but she can also be a prostitute, a seductress or a witch. Especially in children's dreams these opposite aspects are pronounced.

The dark aspect will most likely appear when a man has suppressed or underestimated his female nature, treating women with contempt or carelessness.

He anima can also appear in the form a fey or an elf and lure men away from their work or home, like the sirens in ancient times. In mythology and literature she continues to appear as a goddess and 'femme fatale'.

In the life of men the anima expresses herself not only in the projection to women, but also in his creative activities, in his fantasies, his moods, premonitions, and emotional explosions. An old Chinese text says that when a man wakes up in the morning with a heavy or bad mood, it is his soul, or anima, that is responsible for this. She disturbs his concentration by whispering absurd ideas and spoils his day by supplying him with a vague feeling that something is not all right, or she wanders through his dreams with seductive visions.

Positive and negative as just two sides of a coin. In essence the anima is a guide to the psychological development of a man. Each time when man's logical mind is not able to recognize or understand unconscious contents, his anima will help him to dig them out. His

anima helps him to tune himself to the correct inner values and thereby helping him to open the door to his inner world. Thus the anima takes the role of guide and mediator in his inner world. Then man has to take serious those feelings, moods, expectations and fantasies sent by his anima, and fix them in one form or another, like writing, painting, sculpting. When he is working on this with patience then his unconscious contents will well up and connect with earlier material. Whatever results from it has to be examined both intellectually as well as with his feelings. It is important to consider it is not just 'fantasy', but that is very real.

The Animus

The animus in women is the counterpart of the anima in men. Like the anima, the animus has three roots: the collective image of a man that a woman acquires, her own experiences with men in her life, and the latent male principle in herself.

The animus also has good and bad aspects. In contrast with the anima in men which appears most often in the form of erotic fantasies or moods, the animus has a stronger tendency to appear in the form of 'sacred' convictions. This male part in women is apparent when she lectures with a loud, obtrusive, male voice, or by unreasonable, emotional scenes. Even in a woman who at the outside is very feminine, the anima can be a hard, unforgiving power. That woman can suddenly become stubborn, cold and completely inaccessible.

Typical for such women is the endless repetition of thoughts like: "The only thing in the world I want is love, but he doesn't love me." Or "In this situation there are only two possibilities, and both are as bad". The animus never believes in exceptions. In general one cannot contradict an animus, because usually it is right, but at the same time it doesn't quite fit the individual situation. It is mostly only a reasoning, an opinion. It looks right, but is beside the point.

Just as the anima of a man is formed by his experience of his mother, so the animus of a woman is formed through hers of her father. The father gives her indisputable 'true' convictions that never include the personal reality of the daughter herself.

In his negative aspect, the animus is personified by a cocoon of dreamy thoughts, filled with desires and judgments of 'how things must be', excluding the reality of her own life. In his positive aspect, he can be very valuable aid in building a bridge to the Self by his creative ability.

The animus often appears (especially in dreams) as a group of men, this shows that the animus personifies a collective element rather than a personal element. Because of the collective aspect, women usually in reference to "they" or 'everybody' include 'always', 'should' and 'must'.

The animus is a kind of a collection of fathers and similar authorities, who pass an intellectualized, indisputable judgment. It is mostly formed from words and opinions picked up from childhood on and later brought together into a canon of half-truths, a treasure chest of preconceptions. They are justified by "It is always done like that" or "Everybody is saying that it like this". This critical judgment can sometimes act against her self resulting in an inferiority complex limiting her self-initiative. In other situations she can turn against people in a completely destructive way. She will criticize her neighbors, demolish the reputation of strangers without any reasonable explanation, or she makes belittling remarks to her family members or people with whom she works with the opinion that "it is good for them", or "I like to call things by their name", or "I just do not want to spoil them".

An intelligent and developed woman is just as susceptible to the negative aspects of the animus as less developed one. A less developed woman will quote a newspaper instead of the state or a university. If her opinion is being questioned she will become quarrelsome or dogmatic. This side of a woman craves for power. She can become aggressive, dominating and unreasonable. Because of this aspect of the animus it is very difficult for a woman to think in a non-prejudiced

way. She always has to be aware of that inner voice that constantly tells her "that it needs to be this way", or "they should do it this way".

The positive side of the animus is that when a woman needs the courage and the aggressively he will be there to support her. When a woman realizes that her opinions are based on generalities and authorities, then the animus can help her to look for knowledge and wisdom.

Significance of Anima and Animus

The way anima and animus function can be made conscious, but they are themselves factors that are transcendent to the conscious, and thus to perception and will. They remain autonomous and one needs to keep an eye on them.

Anima and animus are mediators between the conscious and the unconscious psyche. They can be understood when they appear, personified, in fantasies, dreams, visions.

The Old Wise Man

After the anima and animus, the archetypes of the old wise man and the great mother arise, respectively in man and woman.

The old wise man appears in the form of king, hero, medicine man, savior, magician, saint, ruler over man and spirits, God's closest friend and so on. This archetype is a real danger for the personality, because once it has been aroused, a man can easily believe that he possesses 'mana', real magical power, and wisdom. He who is possessed by this archetype believes he is gifted with great (maybe esoteric) wisdom, prophetic gifts, the ability to heal and so on. Such a man can gather followers, as he has entered the unconscious way further than anybody else.

The archetype has a fascinating power, intuitively felt by people and not easily resisted. They are fascinated by what he is saying, but after analysis it is often not intelligent. The power of the old wise man can be destructive as it forces a man to act above his power and capacity. He does not possess the wisdom he claims. In reality it is the voice of the unconscious that should be subjected to criticism and analysis.

The Great Mother

In a woman the archetype of the great mother acts in a similar way to the old wise man in a man. Any woman possessed by this archetype, believes that she is gifted with an unlimited capacity to love and to understand, to help and to protect, and she will exhaust herself in service to others. The archetype can be destructive when the woman is fixated on the belief that anybody within her sphere of influence are 'her children' and therefore they are helpless or dependent on her.

***It is possible to establish a set of steps which take to the final goal.**

“The self is relatedness... The self only exists inasmuch as you appear. Not that you are, but that you do the self. The self appears in your deeds and deeds always mean relationship.” (Jung 1935-39, p. 73)

“Individuation is an heroic and often tragic task, the most difficult of all, it involves suffering, a passion of the ego: the ordinary empirical man we once were is burdened with the fate of losing himself in a greater dimension and being robbed of his fancied freedom of will. He suffers, so to

... speak, from the violence done to him by the self.”
(1942a, para. 233)

He adds:

“Human nature has an invincible dread of becoming more conscious of itself. What nevertheless drives us to it is the self which demands sacrifice by sacrificing itself to us.”
(Jung 1942, para. 400)

1. The first step is the assimilation of the shadow. In Jung's psychology, the shadow represents the negative (dark) side of the ego. In other words, it represents the ethical aspects which are rejected by the ego and which are projected in other persons as belonging to them. The assimilation of the shadow means the acknowledgment of these moral deficiencies as being part of our own personality. The shadow can appear in dreams in the form of close people - friends, relatives, and work colleagues - who present critical behavior features from our point of view. For example, a person having a turn for alcohol or misanthropy, can incarnate our own inclinations of this type and show up in our dream as a known character - friend or a relative. His presence in our dream makes us uncomfortable and we automatically reject him/her as undesirable.

2. A second step is the confrontation with the anima (for a woman, animus). Anima is the man's femininity and generally speaking his emotional side. The anima archetype controls the relationship between man and woman in different stages, from the mother-son relationship to the marriage. The anima can symbolize different experiences, from the woman who awakens the eros of the man, to the spiritual guide or the supreme goddess (Isis, for the Egyptians, the Virgin Mary for the Christians).

3. The third step is the encounter with the archetype of the Wise Old Man. This image embraces our inborn wisdom, the meaning, the significance; it is the spirit or the spiritual (not to be confused with the intellect). The wise man symbolizes a distinct thinking, completely unknown by the ego, a universal and timeless wisdom.

He can take the form of a guru in our dreams (Buddha, Ramana Maharshi), professor (Albert Einstein), doctor (Sigmund Freud), priest (Albert Schweitzer) etc., in short, any public figure with authority, offering advices or teachings. Jung states that this archetype manifests itself in difficult life times (which trigger the individuation process) and which offer basically a bridge from the initial difficulty to a balance state, felt as a salvation.

An essential point has to be emphasized: the individuation process is generally not a process which can be completed in a given time frame. The unconscious cannot be completely assimilated - it is practically infinite in its manifestation. This is the reason why the process can take a life time or it can finalize itself after the death!

The road which takes us to the accomplishment of the individuation is not a direct one, but one with deviations and extremes ([enantiodynamia](#)) which place the individual in contradictory positions and often cause unbearable moral sufferings.

STEVE: Ok, there you have it—in a nutshell. Individuation is a choice and most do not choose it. The process does not happen completely naturally, the persona would prefer we just let sleeping dogs lie.

I suggest you read the Gospels through the lens of this process. You will see Jesus speaking to the shadow, you will see that Satan could be Christ's shadow. He pokes at the various Personas of those he talks with and heals. You will see the Animus and Anima at work as well as the archetypes of the wise old man and woman.