

Individuation

Applied Jung Foundation Modules

Murray Stein 'Individuation' The Handbook of Jungian Psychotherapy

Individuation is a term used to indicate a person's potential for full psychological development...In its simplest formula, individuation is the capacity for wholeness and evolved consciousness.

Individuation refers to the process of becoming the personality that one innately is potentially from the beginning of life. a

Neumann three stages:

Containment (the maternal stage),

Adapting and adjusting (the paternal or patriarchal stage)

Centring and integrating (individual stage)

Discuss individuation as a practical, psychological and ethical approach and what that means, i.e. the individuation project.

Individuation as an archetypal and spiritual process

Jung's two stages of life the instinctive and the cultural.

morning and afternoon of life

The 'morning' of life corresponds to the first half of life, and the 'afternoon' to the second half of life. This metaphor has the following significance:

There is something sunlike within us, and to speak of the morning and spring, of the evening and autumn of life is not mere sentimental jargon CW8 ¶ 780

We thus give expression to psychological truths and, and even more, to physiological facts, for the reversal of sun at noon changes even bodily characteristics CW8 ¶ 780

We cannot live the afternoon of life according to the program life's morning; for what was great in the morning will be little at evening, and what in the morning was true will at evening have become a lie CW8 ¶ 784

The afternoon of human life must also have a significance of its own and cannot be merely a pitiful appendage to life's morning CW8 ¶ 787

The significance of the morning undoubtedly lies in the development of the individual, our entrenchment in the outer world, the propagation of our kind, and the care of our children. This is the obvious purpose of nature CW8 ¶ 787

Whoever carries over into the afternoon the law of the morning, or the natural aim [of nature], must pay for it with damage to his soul, just as surely as a growing youth who tries to carry over his childish egoism into adult life must pay for this mistake with social failure CW8 ¶ 787

Money-making, social achievement, family and posterity are nothing but plain nature, not culture. Culture lies outside the purpose of nature. Could by any chance culture be the meaning and purpose of the second half of life? CW8 ¶ 787

The challenge and opportunity of finding a point of synthesis or transcendence between the instinctive and cultural selves.

The Master (Paul Thomas Anderson, 2012) prison cell scene the confrontation between the instinctive and cultural selves

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJBjD9vJJaU>

Individuation is a heroic and often tragic task, the most difficult of all.

C. G. Jung.

In the process of individuation, the heroic task is to assimilate unconscious contents as opposed to being overwhelmed by them. The potential result is the release of energy that has been tied up with unconscious complexes.

C. G. Jung.

Initiation and the call to individuation

Many people are being dragged toward wholeness in their daily lives, but because they do not understand initiation rites, they cannot make sense of what is happening to them.

They are being presented with the possibility of rebirth into a different life.

Through failures, symptoms, inferiority feelings and overwhelming problems, they are being prodded to renounce life attachments that have become redundant.

The possibility of rebirth constellates with the breakdown of what has gone before.

But because they do not understand, people cling to the familiar, refuse to make the necessary sacrifices, resist their own growth. Unable to give up their habitual lives, they are unable to receive new life.

Marion Woodman

The unconscious always tries to produce an impossible situation in order to force the individual to bring out his very best. Otherwise, one stops short of one's best, one is not complete, one does not realize oneself. What is needed is an impossible situation where one has to renounce one's own will and one's own wit and do nothing but wait and trust to the impersonal power of growth and development.

Carl Gustav Jung

I remember my youth and the feeling that will never come back any more /the feeling that I could last for ever, outlast the sea, the earth, and all men; the deceitful feeling that lures us on to joys, to perils, to love, to vain effort /to death; the triumphant conviction of strength, the heat of life in the handful of dust, the glow in the heart that with every year grows dim, grows cold, grows small, and expires /and expires, too soon, too soon /before life itself.

Joseph Conrad

Yesterday I met a whole person. It is a rare experience, but always an illuminating and ennobling one. It costs so much to be a full human being that there are very few who have the enlightenment, or the courage, to pay the price... One has to abandon altogether the search for security, and reach out to the risk of living with both arms. One has to embrace the world like a lover, and yet demand no easy return on love. One has to accept pain as a condition of existence. One has to court doubt and darkness as the cost of knowing. One needs a will stubborn in conflict, yet open always to the total acceptance of every consequence of living and dying."

Morris West

Leonard Cohen, *Hallelujah* (1984)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8AWFf7EAc4>

I've heard there was a secret chord
That David played, and it pleased the Lord
But you don't really care for music, do you?
Well it goes like this
The fourth, the fifth
The minor fall, the major lift
The baffled king composing Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Well your faith was strong but you needed proof
You saw her bathing on the roof
Her beauty in the moonlight overthrew you
Well she tied you to a kitchen chair
She broke your throne, and cut your hair
And from your lips she drew the Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Baby I've been here before
I've seen this room, and I've walked this floor
I used to live alone before I knew you.
I've seen your flag on the marble arch
Our love is not a victory march
It's a cold and it's a broken Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

There was a time when you let me know

What's really going on below

But now you never show it to me, do you?

And remember when I moved in you

The holy dove was moving too

And every breath we drew was Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Maybe there's a God above

But all I've ever learned from love

Was how to shoot at somebody who outdrew you

Its not a cry that you can hear at night

Its not someone who has seen the light

Its a cold and broken Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

You say I took the name in vain

I don't even know the name

But if I did, well really, what's it to you?

There's a blaze of light in every word

It doesn't matter which you heard

The holy or the broken Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Hallelujah, Hallelujah

I did my best, it wasn't much
I couldn't feel, so I tried to touch
I've told the truth, I didn't come to fool you
And even though it all went wrong
I'll stand before the Lord of Song
With nothing on my tongue but Hallelujah

Meaning:

The need for meaning and the role of meaning in the individuation process. And the juxtaposition of meaning and meaninglessness. (sense and nonsense)

Man cannot stand a meaningless life.

Jung (1959)

Meaninglessness inhibits fullness of life and is therefore equivalent to illness. Meaning makes a great many things endurable—perhaps everything.

Jung (1965)

... when we are unconscious, life has no meaning.

Jung (1929)

"You open the gates of the soul to let the dark flood of chaos flow into your order and meaning. If you marry the ordered to the chaos you produce the divine child, the supreme meaning beyond meaning and meaninglessness."

— C.G. Jung, The Red Book: A Reader's Edition

The Red Book (liber novus) p. 120 on the ‘supreme meaning’

“As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being.” MDR

“The life that I could still live, I should live, and the thoughts that I could still think, I should think.”

— C.G. Jung, The Red Book: Liber Novus

“Be silent and listen: have you recognized your madness and do you admit it? Have you noticed that all your foundations are completely mired in madness? Do you not want to recognize your madness and welcome it in a friendly manner? You wanted to accept everything. So accept madness too. Let the light of your madness shine, and it will suddenly dawn on you. Madness is not to be despised and not to be feared, but instead you should give it life...If you want to find paths, you should also not spurn madness, since it makes up such a great part of your nature...Be glad that you can recognize it, for you will thus avoid becoming its victim. Madness is a special form of the spirit and clings to all teachings and philosophies, but even more to daily life, since life itself is full of craziness and at bottom utterly illogical. Man strives toward reason only so that he can make rules for himself. Life itself has no rules. That is its mystery and its unknown law. What you call knowledge is an attempt to impose something comprehensible on life.”

— C.G. Jung, The Red Book: A Reader's Edition

“As long as you are not conscious of your self you can live; but if you become conscious of your self you fall from one grave into another. All your rebirths could ultimately make you sick. The Buddha therefore finally gave up on rebirth, for he had had enough of crawling through all human and animal forms. After all the rebirths you still remain the lion crawling on the earth, the Chameleon, a caricature, one prone to changing colors, a crawling shimmering lizard, but precisely not a lion, whose nature is related to the sun, who draws his power from within himself who does not crawl around in the protective colors of the environment, and who does not defend himself by going into hiding. I recognized the chameleon and no longer want to crawl on the earth and change colors and be reborn; instead I want to exist from my own force, like the sun which gives light and does not suck light.

That belongs to the earth. I recall my solar nature and would like to rush to my rising. But ruins stand in my way They say: 'With regard to men you should be this or that.' My chameleonesque skin shudders. They obtrude upon me and want to color me. But that should no longer be. Neither good nor evil shall be my masters. I push them aside, the laughable survivors, and go on

my way again, which leads me to the East. The quarreling powers that for so long stood between me and myself lie behind me."

— C.G. Jung, *The Red Book: Liber Novus*

'Don Quixote explains to Sancho that Homer and Virgil did not describe the characters as they were, but as they had to be in order to be an example to the future men of their virtues. Now, Don Quixote himself is anything but a role model. Novel characters don't ask to be admired for their virtues. They ask to be understood, which is something completely different. Epic heroes win or, if defeated, retain their greatness until the last breath. Don Quixote has been defeated. And without any greatness. Because suddenly everything becomes clear: human life as such is a defeat. The only thing left before this irreparable defeat that we call life is to try to understand it. This is the reason for being the art of the novel.'

— Milan Kundera

Frau V. (12-15-1933)

Switzerland

Dear Frau V.,

Your questions are unanswerable because you want to know how one ought to live. One lives as one can. There is no single, definite way for the individual which is prescribed for him or would be the proper one. If that's what you want you had best join the Catholic Church, where they tell you what's what. Moreover this way fits in with the average way of mankind in general. But if you want to go your individual way, it is the way you make for yourself, which is never prescribed, which you do not know in advance, and which simply comes into being of itself when you put one foot in front of the other. If you always do the next thing that needs to be done, you will go most safely and sure-footedly along the path prescribed by your unconscious. Then it is naturally no help at all to speculate about how you ought to live. And then you know, too, that you cannot know it, but quietly do the next and most necessary thing. So long as you think you don't yet know what this is, you still have too much money to spend in useless speculation. But if you do with conviction the next and most necessary thing, you are always doing something meaningful and intended by fate. JL1

INDIVIDUATION BRINGS TO BIRTH A CONSCIOUSNESS OF HUMAN COMMUNITY (individuation and society)

Although the conscious achievement of individuality is consistent with man's natural destiny, it is nevertheless not his whole aim. It cannot possibly be the object of human education to create

an anarchic conglomeration of individual existences. That would be too much like the unavowed ideal of extreme individualism, which is essentially no more than a morbid reaction against an equally futile collectivism. In contrast to all this, the natural process of individuation brings to birth a consciousness of human community precisely because it makes us aware of the unconscious, which unites and is common to all mankind. Individuation is an at-one-ment with oneself and at the same time with humanity, since oneself is a part of humanity. Once the individual is thus secured in himself, there is some guarantee that the organized accumulation of individuals in the Stateeven in one wielding greater authoritywill result in the formation no longer of an anonymous mass but of a conscious community. The indispensable condition for this is conscious freedom of choice and individual decision. Without this freedom and self-determination there is no true community, and, it must be said, without such community even the free and self-secured individual cannot in the long run prosper. CW16 ¶ 227