

Conscious spirituality in search of truth...



We all wear masks

CARL JUNG: THE SHADOW SIDE OF OURSELVES

It has often been said that no-one knows who we are and that our facial expressions or verbal communications often hide our true persona which can be likened to a mask we wear when interacting with other people. This mask is said to hide our true or deeper identity. Imagine someone who is an actor portraying somebody completely different from their real self whilst playing a role on stage or in a film.

Carl Jung a highly renowned psychotherapist, psychologist and author of seventeen volumes of literature on human behaviour suggests this 'mask' as worn by people in everyday life can often hide or reveal the "shadow" or hidden parts of our 'ego.' This shadow is said to represent both our conscious and unconscious self which can often be detrimental to our spiritual and psychological growth. An article identified in "The Portable Jung" explains Jung's "shadow." An extract follows.

–Philip Crouch, Tasmania, 2020

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“Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist and founder of analytical psychology, is best known for his theories of the Collective Unconscious, the archetypes, and synchronicity. Along with Sigmund Freud, Jung pioneered modern theories of the relationships between the conscious and *unconscious* aspects of the mind. While Freud focused more on the psychosexual tensions within the mind, Jung branched out and examined the spiritual conflicts that exist within us all.”

‘The shadow is simply the dark side of someone's personality. And what is dark is always known only indirectly through projection. That is, one discovers his dark side as something belonging to others: friends, relatives, fictitious characters, etc. This is why the meeting with the personal shadow is considered to be a moral effort. The difficulty of integrate the shadow is huge, if we have to face alone this powerful figure.

The dark side/shadow feature may be also equalled with the Freudian personal unconscious. It comprises everything one repressed because is rejected by the superego. Freud linked these repressed contents mainly with the sexual drives. Therefore the shadow has almost always a sexual component.



The shadow is the first to be met when one starts his self analysis. As long as the shadow is not assimilated and controlled by the consciousness, it may appear in dreams and fantasies mingled with the anima archetype. Thus one can dream of bad women or witches, of women with personal high power and destructive impulses affecting man's mind and Eros.

There's also the phallic mother (a female figure endowed with phallic, aggressive powers) if the dreamer repressed a part of his own aggressiveness. The black shadow may appear as an archetype too. The devil's images and the demonic features (symbols) are very common to men's dreams. Also the devil-like characters - who compensate the luminous figure of the Saviours - share the shadow realm.

JUNG-ABOUT 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.



Suggested resources:

The Shadow Side of Ourselves, Carl Jung; Internet article:

+ **Aion**: Phenomenology of the Self published in **The Portable Jung**, edited by Joseph Campbell, Penguin Books, 1976, p.145.

<https://www.carl-jung.net/shadow.html>

Memories Dreams and Reflections, Anielia Jaffe, PDF:

[http://r.4dt.org/text/jung/Memories,%20Dreams,%20Reflections%20\(19xx\).pdf](http://r.4dt.org/text/jung/Memories,%20Dreams,%20Reflections%20(19xx).pdf)

Carl Jung, "The Individuation Process"

https://www.carl-jung.net/individuation_process.html

