

Jung and Hypnotherapy

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Abstract: The basic premise of this article is that hypnotherapy provides a solid vehicle for utilizing Jungian or analytical psychology in the healing of the psyche. Carl Jung famously decided not to continue to use hypnosis in his psychotherapy after a period of fairly intensive exploration with hypnosis. It is clear from Jung's writings that the way he was using hypnosis was what is called today "paternal" hypnosis, i.e., the hypnotist gives specific suggestions for attitude or behavior change to the entranced client. He referred to it as "hypnotic suggestion-therapy". While Jung eschewed formal trance induction, hypnosis and suggestion remained part of his therapeutic repertoire. This article explores the many ways in which the hypnotic trance state within the context of hypnotherapy, accesses the imaginal abilities of the mind just as reflected in the states of dreaming and active imagination.

The imaginal abilities of the mind are reflected in the states of dreaming, active imagination, and hypnosis. The basic premise of this article is that hypnotherapy provides a solid vehicle for utilizing Jungian or analytical psychology in the healing of the psyche.

The hypnotic trance state offers a number of specific advantages to any depth exploration of the psyche, to be discussed at length in this article:

- access to, and indeed activation of, the somatic unconscious through implicit memories, vis-à-vis the dominance of theta frequency brain waves.
- access to being in the subconscious state (theta brain waves) while retaining a link (alpha) to the conscious mind (beta).
- bypasses the conscious mind and its defended ego and persona. The altered state ego is less defended and more loosely identified with a historic self-image, allowing more direct access to the complexes, Shadows, Animus or Anima, and the personification of the Self.

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- a neutral point of view available to the hypnotic ego, relative to the waking ego. There is a natural fluidity to moving into and out of various complexes, and to recognizing the relationship between them. The phenomenon of self-hypnosis brings into focus this fluidity, where there is an active ego and a recipient or passive ego engaging one another.
- powerful “corrective emotional experiences”, e.g., in hypnotic age regression the individual discovers, revivifies, and re-empowers the age-regressed ego state that originally split thus creating a complex.
- provides containment for the client, not only through unconditional acceptance and through carrying the client’s projections without reacting, but also temporarily assuming the responsibility of the ego itself to maintain coherence among the tacit components of its structure, allowing components permission and freedom to express.
- can be observed to be a “lived through form of active imagination,” just as the transference situation in Jungian analysis can be considered a form of active imagination. The analyst or hypnotherapist has a role in analytic therapy similar to that of the ego in active imagination: the therapist engages with the patient’s spontaneously arising material to encourage dialogue.
- The framework of hypnotherapy provides a very useful vehicle for accessing the altered state necessary as catalyst to receptivity to the unconscious imagery. Clinical reports show that the most common problem in depth psychological work is blocked imagery.
- one of the distinct advantages of hypnosis as a catalyst for active imagination or dream work is the dual focus that is generated on both physical sensation and psychical mentation. Direct access to both ends of the spectrum of the unconscious yields content from pre-verbal and pre-conscious levels, transpersonal and psychospiritual experiences. This can, for many people, “prime the pump” of the flow of imagery and unconscious material.

- hypnosis can facilitate the incorporation of shamanic practices to access the psychoidal realm.

Jung and hypnosis

Carl Jung famously decided not to continue to use hypnosis in his psychotherapy after a period of fairly intensive exploration with hypnosis. He played with the stage show demonstration of suggesting to a hypnotized person that he is “stiff as a board” and then placing him across two chairs with only his head on one chair and his feet on the other.¹ He did incorporate hypnosis into his clinical practice when he first opened his private practice in psychiatry. In fact, one of his first patients was a woman who presented with a painful paralysis of the leg, and he “cured” her using hypnosis. She then spread the word of Jung’s remarkable hypnotic abilities. Her recommendation was responsible for the first private patients that came to him. He continued using hypnosis in his practice for a time, but later abandoned it in favor of dream work and the active imagination technique he developed.² James A. Hall states clearly that “Jungian dream work and active imagination approximate many of the techniques of hypnosis without adopting the language and literature of hypnosis”.³

It is clear from Jung’s writings that the way he was using hypnosis was what is called today “paternal” hypnosis, i.e., the hypnotist gives specific suggestions for attitude or behavior change to the entranced client. He referred to it as “hypnotic suggestion-therapy”.⁴ Due to the directive style of hypnosis employed, Jung was concerned about the dependence that might develop in the patient’s transference onto the therapist and explained, “I did not give up hypnosis because I wanted to avoid dealing with the basic forces of the human psyche, but because I wanted to do battle with them directly and openly”.⁵

Jung rejected the “suggestion-therapy” aspect of hypnosis, as most modern day hypnotherapists do, preferring what is called “maternal” hypnosis. The hypnotic trance state is the same, i.e., subjects can experience subjective signs of alteration of their consciousness with both hypnosis styles. But the alternate choice of styles does result in differences: 1) maternal style is more emotional, while paternal style is rather cognitive and sovereign; 2) while hypnotizing, maternal hypnotists are more likely to feel

the alterations of their own level of consciousness, while paternal hypnotists remain reality-oriented.⁶ The psychoanalyst Ferenczi⁷ coined the terms “maternal hypnosis” and “paternal hypnosis” for the two styles, believing that the patient was literally regressing to early libidinal ties to either his/her mother or father.

Whilst Jung eschewed formal trance induction, hypnosis and suggestion remained part of his therapeutic repertoire. In particular, patients’ accounts of analysis with him show his ability to handle spontaneously arising trances as well as to navigate individuals in the self-induced trances which were linked to the practice of active imagination. In this regard, Jung’s early explorations in hypnosis formed an ever-present background to his therapeutic work.⁸

What is hypnosis?

We will explore a number of definitions, or descriptions of hypnosis. First of all it is an altered state of consciousness. August Cwik, a clinical psychologist and Jungian analyst, states that hypnosis:

involves a lowering of consciousness, an *abaissement de niveau mental* as Jung noted (borrowing Janet’s terminology). The hallmarks of the state include: a receptiveness to suggestion; shifts in the experience of self, i.e., feelings of lightness or heaviness, drowsiness or heightened attention; slight body movements that may indicate unconscious connections to memory, fantasy, and/or affect, as in ideo-motor responding; and, most importantly, an access to unconscious processes and material, i.e., the experience of affect can be enhanced or de-limited; imagery, fantasy and/or imaginal auditory experiences may come into awareness.⁹

James A. Hall places hypnosis in the context of the imaginal abilities of the mind, related to the states of dreaming and active imagination. Hypnosis carries a potential advantage, of course, in having access to an outside helper or facilitator during the imaginal experience.

Freud and Jung both used hypnosis clinically, and each eventually decided to use an alternative approach to accessing the unconscious: Freud developed the technique of *free association*, and Jung began to use *active imagination*. Both of these techniques utilize a state of consciousness that might be labeled *reverie*, and could well be recognized as a form of self-hypnosis. Jay Haley once said, “Psychoanalysis is just hypnosis in slow motion.”

Simply, “hypnosis can be understood as direct activation of the implicit memory system”.¹⁰ Implicit memory^{11,12} is a

component of our somatic memory; it is a brain faculty present prenatally. This form of memory is devoid of a conscious experience of recollection, but includes behavioral, emotional, perceptual and somatosensory forms of memory.

Explicit memories are generally stored with awareness of the role of the self in the event (Kihlstrom, 1987), i.e. they are first person memories, whereas implicit memories are frequently of what to do rather than who did it, and are therefore seen as impersonal or third person. The activation of implicit memories can often seem devoid of reference to the self. One does not remember having learned to perform the procedure and it seems to be carried out automatically. The identification of the self with the memory has been viewed as an important criterion for the development of self identity (Kihlstrom, 1987). However, the availability of an implicit memory system suggests that we have a template within our brain for the paradox of experiencing ourselves in the third person.¹³

The hypnotic trance state offers just this third person perspective, and provides access to, and indeed activates, the somatic unconscious through implicit memories. In adulthood, triggers of implicit memory recollections can be experienced as non-verbal sensations or behavioral impulses. Such felt experience can be incorporated into active imagination, as shown by the work of Jungian analysts Joan Chodorow¹⁴, Wendy Wyman-McGinty¹⁵, and Shayne Spitzer^{16,17}. Embodied implicit memory formulates in any depth exploration of the psyche, be it analysis, dream work, or hypnotherapy. The body has a versatile, integrative language of its own as it gives physical form to psychological realities that may be otherwise silent. Paying attention to what is being said through this language first requires accessing it and becoming fluent in it. Hypnosis is well documented as a vehicle for accessing and focusing on the somatic unconscious. Further, such access benefits the hypnotherapy subject in solidifying new behavior patterns that result from the therapeutic intervention, rendering them automatic, with implicit rather than explicit control.

Neuropsychology

The mechanism for creating a split or disconnection between conscious and unconscious experience is observable in brain wave patterns. A person's unconscious experience, both personal and collective, both traumatic and spiritual, is accessed by that person when their brain is generating *theta* brain waves. In order

for the unconscious experience to be carried back into consciousness, the person must have a bridging *alpha* brain wave pattern, bringing access to the memory of the unconscious experience back to the *beta* brain wave everyday conscious mind.¹⁸ The hypnotic age regression process offers access to being in the subconscious state (theta) while retaining a link (alpha) to the conscious mind (beta).

Both hypnosis and mindfulness meditation states feature higher levels of activity in areas where theta frequency brain waves are prominent, especially the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC)^{19,20} and the hippocampus, source of these theta rhythms.²¹

We know that the neuroscience of mindfulness and hypnosis is parallel, causing changes in brain activation of the same magnitude. Both feature cortical inhibition as revealed by slowed EEG theta waves, and both show higher levels of activity in areas where theta is prominent, such as the frontal cortex and especially the anterior cingulate cortex.²²

The anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) is particularly important as an interface switch between executive function and default mode function (for a detailed discussion of the default mode network refer to Hartman & Zimberoff, 2011), and is referred to as the salience network.²³ It has been linked to monitoring task performance and the modulation of arousal during cognitively demanding tasks.²⁴ In other words, this part of the brain decides when to pay attention to the outside world (task-oriented) and when to focus on the internal world (introspection). These altered states of consciousness, i.e., hypnosis and mindfulness meditation, offer unique access to the mind's higher-order control of awareness and focused attention.

The ACC has been associated with monitoring for competition among potential responses or processes. Such conflict monitoring can signal the need for top-down cognitive control, which facilitates the switching of attentional focus between external/ internal focus, or task/ rest.²⁵ Increased ACC activity is followed by increased top-down control through suppressing irrelevant thoughts.²⁶ An example of this is that hypnosis-induced reduction of pain perception, a common function of hypnosis that has been validated in many studies, is related to an increased functional modulation of the ACC.²⁷ Hypnotic suggestion provides the brain with a mechanism of

intervening in a bottom-up autonomous pain response by generating a top-down alternative experience.

Recently, positron emission tomography (PET) research has confirmed the involvement of the ACC in the production of hypnotic states.²⁸ Hypnotic states are characterized by a decrease in cortical arousal, described as the brain's attentional system, and a reduction in cross-modality suppression (disinhibition). This accounts for the experience of "flow" and insight so common in the hypnotic trance state.

At the same time, hypnosis also brings about an inhibition of the left dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain activated when we engage in deliberate conscious planning, organizing, and regulating.²⁹ Conscious everyday thinking is quieted to make way for more creative, inspired, nonlinear connections.

Clinical research documents that during the hypnotic state, the capacity to access and influence functions beyond conscious control is increased.³⁰ For example, heart rate variability provides a tool to evaluate the hypnotic state through acute cardiac autonomic alterations.³¹ The heart rate variability may even be useful in measuring the depth of hypnotic trance state.

Most states of consciousness carry an anticorrelation between 'rest' and goal-directed behavior, between self- and external-awareness networks, between openness and focused attention; the more awareness is focused on internal processing (introspection, or self-awareness), the less it is available for attention to sensory input (external awareness) and goal-directed focus, and vice-versa. The hypnotic trance state is an exception; parts of the brain that are normally activated with an opposite on/off switch can be dissociated from each other to allow both to activate at the same time. Under hypnosis, the ACC is activated which narrows attention. But, unlike in the waking state of narrowed attention, the posterior attentional system which stimulates vigilance is *deactivated* during hypnosis.³² Thus hypnosis creates a state of dual effect: relaxation yet responsiveness.

Memory consolidation of experiences during the day is enhanced when the brain functions at theta frequency, which occurs in the hippocampus and is dominant during REM sleep.³³ Theta brain waves are increased during hypnosis, as we now

know, indicating why it is so fortuitous to correct old beliefs, release old perseverating memories, and construct new paradigms within the hypnotic trance state.

Jungian work in hypnotherapy

A child creates a set of behaviors established to defend against psychic and/or physical assault, and we can call that set of behaviors a *shadow*. As those behavior patterns become more idealized with reference to archetypal power, we can call them a *complex*. The complex, given the job by the child to protect against assault, continues the process of splitting and specializing already underway, calcifies into habitual unconscious autopilot mode, and evolves into an *autonomous complex*.

We access these split-off parts through dreams, of course, and through age regression hypnotic trance. This altered state utilizes the individual's *inferior function*, or least developed aspects, to participate in the mental processing in a way that it normally doesn't. The hypnotic altered state accentuates one's inferior function. For example, the sensation type often experiences the sudden blinding light of intuitive certainty, and the thinking type experiences a profound immersion in deep emotion and "gut feeling". This allows direct contact with the complexes and their underlying archetypes in a similar way to that provided by dream work, by the transference within the analytic relationship, and by *active imagination*, a technique we will discuss at length. As well, the hypnotic altered state provides direct access to one's *anima/ animus*, the counter-gendered aspect within an individual's psyche.

The inferior function is the door through which all the figures of the unconscious come into consciousness. Our conscious realm is like a room with four doors, and it is the fourth door by which the Shadow, the Animus or the Anima, and the personification of the Self come in. They do not enter as often through the other doors, which is in a way self-evident: the inferior function is so close to the unconscious and remains so barbaric and inferior and underdeveloped that it is naturally the weak spot in consciousness through which the figures of the unconscious can break in.³⁴

There is an indefinable state of consciousness that facilitates depth exploration of the psyche, variously referred to as "evenly hovering attention", reverie, *abaissement de niveau mental*, perhaps a form of self-hypnosis that can apply to both the patient

and the therapist. The hypnotic state provides just this portal of access to the personal and collective unconscious: active imagination type experiences, or perhaps amplification of “dreamlike” material. These are some of the possibilities that unfold:

- age regression. With hypnosis we can return to pivotal experiences in development where the deepest layers of psychic damage occurred and “re-experience” them in the ego state that laid down those critical state-dependent memories (revivify as distinct from “remembering” them). In this way, one finds a trackable trail of development of the complexes at work in one’s life today.
- clear recognition of projections of one’s own unacceptable traits onto the image of another, i.e., reclaiming those projections back into the self-image. One end of the spectrum of troublesome projection is using the defense to avoid personal accountability by blaming others; the other end of the spectrum is having no projections at all, which Jung considered an explanation of narcissism in which all psychic energy is hoarded by the subject.³⁵
- externalizing dissociated psychic parts for more objective identification and dialogue, as we do in transference/ projection and in active imagination. The hypnotic trance state facilitates constructive contact with these “splinter personalities”, or complexes.
- interacting a la active imagination with elements from a dream.
- making contact with inner masculine or feminine through somatic awareness (recognizing the significance of symptoms or sensations on the right or left side of the body, or direct experience of the sympathetic/parasympathetic syzygy).
- giving voice to age-regressed child parts, source of aspects of one’s psyche that we might label shadows or complexes, allowing a direct dialog between ego and complex.
- rehearsing with an imagined other (either someone actually in the client’s life who can be imaginably

conjured during the session, or someone who is imagined as a potential interactant for practice purposes). An example is Milton Erickson's Rehearsal Technique.³⁶

Hypnotherapy and hypnotic psychodrama, through the technology of the hypnotic trance state, can also readily support shamanic techniques such as:

- soul retrieval, i.e., reclaiming split-off parts of the personality, or resources that were lost, stolen, murdered, appropriated, or jettisoned early in life.
- speaking directly with a deceased loved one.
- calling on archetypal resources (power animals, spirit guides, ancestors) for help with healing.

Jung referred to the ultimate organizing principle of the individual as the Self, or the *Archetypal Self*. The Self is the creator of dreams, the organizer of projections, and the basis of every human being's drive to develop to his/her highest potential.

The locus of identity, or current self-image, is what we may call the *waking ego*. The waking ego represents all the complexes that form the content of the personal sphere of the psyche. All of us have numerous complexes, or sets of conditioned responses to the world. These complexes often center around powerful experiences such as mother, father, competition, authority, the hero, etc. The waking ego is generally aware of all these complexes, although not necessarily in control of all of them.³⁷

Complexes are the basic building units of psychological reality, and thus are simply normal parts of the mind. Our complexes allow us to multitask in everyday activities, and to operate on "autopilot" without having to consciously attend to every environmental stimulus. They are formed when a strong emotional experience, or one that is repeated many times, produces a patterning of the mind. The resulting pattern is behavioral (habits), and also consists of beliefs and expectations. A defining characteristic of complexes is that they tend to be bipolar or consist of two opposite parts.^{38 39} Usually when a complex is activated, one part of the bipolar complex attaches

itself to the waking ego, and the other part is split off and rejected. It often gets projected onto someone else. This bipolarity of the complex leads to endless conflict with the illusory other. And an individual may identify at different times with one or the other pole of the spectrum. For instance, in a typical negative father complex, a rebellious son inevitably encounters the authoritarian father in every teacher, cop or boss onto whom he projects his negative father imagery. Yet when he is in the role of the father, or authority, he seems to always encounter the rebellious son onto whom he has projected that role. Complexes originate in the immature psyche of a young child, and therefore they carry the simplistic certainty of a black-and-white world view, in which there are only two possible positions.

When a complex is activated by some event which resonates with it, it steps in to assist or protect the ego self-image, leading to a decrease in the higher functions of consciousness and to a tendency for the complex itself to take over the ego identity. One can be playing innocently with her toddler one moment, and instantly shift into a highly capable adult ego identity when an emergency occurs. Some complexes are not well integrated into waking consciousness, however, and are related to the hidden shadow instead. They may be more demanding when activated, and attempt to invade and usurp the conscious ego identity. They are even capable of “possessing” the individual, in Jung’s terminology.⁴⁰

This bipolar split arrangement is referred to within the context of Attachment Theory as a dual and polarized internal working model: “One component contains a set of omnipotent expectations, based on the child’s view of the parent’s capacities mixed with infantile omnipotence, and the other component is one of total helplessness and enfeeblement, the expectations of an infant facing an unempathic caregiver.”⁴¹

Jung used the term *archetype* to describe a deep tendency to organize experience in certain ways, related to universal human conceptualizations. He likened archetypes to imprinting in animal behavior: there is a critically sensitive time period after birth (or hatching from the egg) that the newborn is innately programmed to follow any available object as its mother. Ducks can imprint on a person or a dog if the mother hen is taken away

and not available. The baby ducks now want to follow whatever they have imprinted as “mother”, they want to be near it and show anxiety in its absence. Instinct is at work.

In a very similar way, human beings are innately programmed to respond to cute babies and sunsets, to the vastness of the oceans and the fierceness of a wildfire, to the inspirational hero figure and the allure of power. Each of these operates as an archetype in the individual who is touched by it. Archetypes are to the psyche what instinct is to physical existence.

There is an archetypal core to every complex, so that the child’s personal experience becomes wrapped around powerful universal imagery. Heroes come to be regarded as superheroes, and villains as supervillains. Authorities may be generalized as protective and loving, or as threatening and dangerous. “Archetypes are like riverbeds which dry up when the water deserts them, but which it can find again at any time. An archetype is like an old watercourse along which the water of life has flowed for centuries, digging a deep channel for itself. The longer it has flowed in this channel the more likely it is that sooner or later the water will return to its old bed.”⁴² In another analogy, offered by James A. Hall, archetypes are like magnetic fields, having no apparent content in themselves but exerting a strong influence on the arrangement of any magnetizable material within the influence of their fields.⁴³ “. . . the archetypes are, so to speak, like many little appetites in us, and if with the passing of time, they get nothing to eat, they start rumbling and upset everything.”⁴⁴

Complexes are dissociated parts of the mind with an archetype at its core, holding clusters of memories together in an unconscious grouping which is dissociated from the rest of mental functioning and serves healthy as well as pathological purposes.⁴⁵ Our complexes are created to allow us to multi-function, to operate on autopilot, and to provide cover and deniability to the ego who wishes to appear innocent. “Jung thought that whatever its roots in previous experience, neurosis consists of a refusal - or inability - in the here and now to bear legitimate suffering. Instead this painful feeling or some representation of it is split off from awareness and the initial wholeness - the primordial Self - is broken. . . . This splitting is a

normal part of life. Initial wholeness is meant to be broken, and it becomes pathological or diagnosable as illness, only when the splitting off of complexes becomes too wide and deep and the conflict too intense.⁴⁶

We project the central archetype that is the Center of the Self outward onto an object in the world that represents an image of the ego's potential, and then identify with that projection. We place the projection out there to mirror back to us what we seek to become. Mirroring is stage-appropriate:

- For a young child, mirroring is provided *unconsciously* by adults and peers – most importantly by parents – to establish ego identity.
- For an adolescent, it is mirrored *unconsciously* by elders and peers – most importantly by peers - to establish ego identity.
- For adults, mirroring is provided *unconsciously* by authorities, celebrities, mentors, spiritual leaders, neighbors, relatives – but most importantly those who trigger one's archetypal complexes – to establish ego identity. Only when the adult matures sufficiently to seek mirroring from a *consciously chosen* other does the mirroring become a proactive request for initiation.

Until adults reach the level of *consciously* seeking initiation, they are *unconsciously* attracted for mirroring from people who activate their dominant archetypal complexes. If mother complex is a prevailing force in my life, I am activated to relate to others as either mother (as modeled for me by my mother) or as child (as my experience in relation to my mother dictates). Those that I am attracted to for representing my developmental potential are either a mother and I am the child, or they are the child and I am the mother.

When the “I” is my complex masquerading as my ego

Complexes are inherently bipolar (mother – child, father – child, rival – rival, hero – villain, dominant – submissive, safe – dangerous, etc.), that is there are at least two adversarial shadows connected with the archetypal core. For example, the child may develop a set of defensive behaviors, to deal with the source of trauma, of aggression and arrogance (which becomes a shadow

over time – call it the Tyrant). But the child is shamed and punished for exhibiting that shadow, so he introjects the parental judgments and develops another behavior set, that of self-blame and inhibition (which becomes another shadow – call it the Shameful One). Now these, two shadows are both intricately connected because each one mutually triggers the other. The child has sought a powerful archetypal ally in the collective that forms the core of an eventual complex around which the implicated shadows constellate. The complex is activated by the conflict between these two shadow tendencies within the complex.

When the ego is caught up in, or captivated by, a complex, the ego identifies with one pole of the polarity (and its core archetype) and projects the other. An extreme example of this is domestic abuse: a violent man feels his dignity is being challenged, perhaps by the boss at work or a traffic cop. That experience activates his Shameful One, which is intolerable for him, and so he projects that shadow onto his spouse and he takes up the identity of the Tyrant. Now he strikes out at her; of course, he is really striking out at the boss or the cop, and at a deeper level at the parent who originally disrespected his dignity. But his shadow at the other end of that pole, his Shameful One, cannot be ignored through projection forever. Following the carnage wrought by the Tyrant, his Shameful One is activated, and he apologizes profusely to his spouse, begging for forgiveness and promising to never do it again. His two shadows, each at opposite poles of the bipolar complex, will continue to irritate and activate each other in an endless loop.

Unfortunately, what I project out there, what my ego has rejected and *disidentified* with, nevertheless remains an inseparable part of me. My complex has created a double bind with no escape: if I identify myself as dominant, then I must project the submissive out onto others (how else can I experience being dominant?), but then I am surrounded by submissive people, or people who challenge me because they refuse to be submissive. The autonomous complex is the embodiment of one's least developed and most conflicted aspect of personality.⁴⁷

The question arises, what is the difference between a complex and an alter personality in an individual diagnosed with Dissociative Identity Disorder (multiple personalities)? The alter

personalities in DID are unipolar, that is there is only one unidimensional shadow which recruits an archetypal ally within each alter. One might be a rageful child, angry at the world for all the mistreatment she experienced. Another might be a careful adaptive child who is hypervigilant, anticipating any potential threat in the immediate environment. Another might be aggressive and arrogant, and another self-blaming and inhibited. Each of these splinter selves has its own archetypal ally, so it exists as one-dimensional. The psyche's conflicts are therefore not *within* each independent personality (as the conflict in an autonomous complex is between component shadows) but rather *between* personalities.

And the healing of DID involves bringing each alter personality from its status as independent to that of being an autonomous complex. Operationally, that means to allow the alter personality to explore its existence and origins enough to develop an awareness of competing shadows. The aggressive and arrogant one becomes aware of the additional dimension of self-blame. The resulting complex has co-consciousness with other splinters within the psyche.

Creative use of the imagination

When we begin to move beyond the bipolar double bind and work with our inner resources directly, instead of through the proxy of an autonomous complex, then we begin to have conscious choice. When adults seek initiation, they move beyond reacting to affinity for complexes in selecting who will provide mirroring. They become discriminating, and select carefully. They ask themselves, "What master will I invest with the prestige and authority necessary for my initiation?" Gain clarity about your complexes first, allowing the polarities to resolve by learning to hold the tension of the opposites, and then recognize that your least developed parts in fact represent your greatest potential. Now you are ready to seek initiation.

That is why the village needed and prized its elders, because true elders were those of us who'd lived long enough to learn how to remember. They knew how to *vek*, or reassemble what the trauma of birth and the trance of everyday survival had made us forget: the words and spirits that made us. They were initiated.⁴⁸

Figures in one's dreams are personifications of the structure of the complexes then active in the psyche. In dreams the archetypal imagery underlying the complexes tends to be more apparent than in waking experience. Other forms of the psyche's capacity for imagination include active imagination, meditation, reverie, and the hypnotic trance state. Since there is an altered locus of self-awareness and self-image in these states, we can conceptualize them as opportunities for complexes within the totality of the psyche to step into and take over the ego identity. Thus the ego identity in one of these altered states can be termed a *dream ego* or *imaginal ego* or *hypnotic ego*. And in these states the waking ego identity, although it has stepped aside to allow internal complexes to express themselves, continues to be present at the same time, to varying degrees. In dreams, unless it is a lucid dream, the waking ego identity is absent. In meditation, reverie and hypnosis the waking ego identity is partially present, with the depth of dissociation determining the degree to which it continues to be aware. In active imagination, the waking ego identity is necessarily present to dialogue with the activated complexes.

There is, therefore, a dual control of complexes, with both the conscious ego and the unconscious aspects of the psyche influencing them. This dual control can be cooperative, of course, or it can be competitive. It is mutual: the ego exerts control over the complexes, just as the complexes exert control over the ego. For example, when a therapeutic intervention is made with a dream ego (spontaneously) or a hypnotic ego (through facilitation), a corresponding change occurs for the waking ego. When a person has a long-standing and repetitive anxiety in dreams and eventually masters the challenging situation in a dream, the mastery "bleeds through" to waking life. In therapy we refer to this phenomenon as "corrective emotional experience", and it provides one of the cornerstones of hypnotherapy: in hypnotic age regression the individual discovers and revivifies the age-regressed ego state that originally split thus creating the complex. That terrified child ego state (hypnotic ego) is finally able to express himself to the abuser, fulfill the interrupted fight/flight trauma response, and establish safe boundaries. The abused child complex experiences a new empowerment, and that affects the waking ego

profoundly.⁴⁹

When children and adults are traumatized beyond their breaking point, they retreat inwardly to call on unconscious resources. Those resources are denizens of the collective unconscious, because the individual's personal unconscious resources are overwhelmed and totally insufficient. Children run away to the circus and identify with one or more of the "bigger than life" characters there; an adult enters the witness protection program and fabricates a new identity. The resulting aspect of the individual's personality is a complex, being the split-off part of the person coated in the protective embrace of the "bigger than life" archetype, a *mana personality* – a personified archetypal image of a supernatural force.

This defense can be very effective at surviving the ongoing trauma, because the person is now accompanied by a powerful companion (whom the person identifies to be them, that is 'me', although a part of me that I don't quite control). It could be a muscle man, a fat lady, or a mild-mannered milquetoast, but whatever form it takes is intended to provide a protective bodyguard for the traumatized and overwhelmed person to hide behind. Creating this bodyguard comes at a steep price, however; the person must turn over to the bodyguard, the complex, the moment-to-moment decision-making about when and how to protect him/her. So the complex might perceive an imminent threat, whether there is actually one or not, and throw himself in front of the one he is sworn to protect, suddenly, without warning or explanation or even rational purpose. The result is neurotic pathology in the form of addictions, thought disorders, anxieties, depression, and other self-sabotaging behaviors. And complex PTSD, or shock as we call it, is the dissociative and defensive pattern embedded in the autonomic nervous system.

Yet there is another exquisite facet to this dance of identity that is life-affirming, that contributes not just the chance to survive but the opportunity to thrive. The alignment of the traumatized person with a "bigger than life" energy/entity is tantamount to an initiation rite, absent a healthy, socially appropriate, formalized initiation. All primitive societies and tribes have their rites of initiation, often very highly developed, which play an extraordinarily important part in their social and religious life. Through these ceremonies boys are made men, and

girls women. Initiation ceremonies are a magical means of leading man from the animal state to the human state. They are clearly transformation mysteries of the greatest spiritual significance.⁵⁰

Healing the deep wounds of severe early abuse and neglect, indeed growth in human potential beyond the everyday normal, requires an encounter with a “bigger than life” extraordinary supernatural force, a mana personality, a mighty man or woman in the form of hero, chief, magician, sorceress, medicine-man, saint, ruler of men and spirits, friend of God. This personality is more clever and more potent than ordinary people, whether it be in the form of a superman like Alexander the Great; a sage like Lao-tzu; the All-Merciful Great Mother; or perhaps an autonomous rebel like Martin Luther King, Jr.

And our healing and growth requires that the encounter with such an extraordinary supernatural force be accomplished humbly, without:

- identifying with the archetype, inflating one’s ego. Forms it might take: “Father Knows Best”; the All-Merciful Great Mother; the Magician; the Guru or the perfect Disciple; or
- projecting the archetype onto another, opening oneself to hero worship and/or the martyr’s “good fight” against demons; or
- replacing archetypes with stereotypes - Jung speaks of the gods as having “become diseases,” through literal interpretations.⁵¹

Instead, the high road of healing and personal development calls on us to accept the encounter as an initiation and to install a transformed new being in place of the old.

These mana personality archetypes in the collective unconscious represent age-old human experience (or more probably longing for experience). Who doesn’t want a benevolent, kind, generous, protective “Father Knows Best”? Who doesn’t want an all-loving, all-forgiving, all-nurturing Great Mother? And what father or mother doesn’t want to see themselves or be seen as just that? When an individual identifies with that ideal icon literally, either in oneself or in another, big trouble is sure to follow. Parents who believe themselves to be the archetypal Mother or Father (or both in the case of some

single parents) too easily become abusively demanding, suffocatingly intrusive, or perhaps pathetically unable to set any limits on children running wild. And one of the clear aberrations of our society today is the totally unrealistic expectation so many place on the community's parental figures (politicians, celebrities, teachers, military leaders) who, in their vain attempt to live up to the impossible standard (having believed the lie themselves), become hypocritical stereotypes – an emperor without clothes. Hitler is a stereotype of an ancient archetype (the Warrior King), tripping up himself and those who blindly believed his capricious fantasy. Too many modern day gurus become stereotypes of the captivating archetype held deep in the human unconscious of an infallible Wise Holy Man, only to succumb to lust for sex, money, or power. The “extraordinarily potent” (gods) have become tainted, contaminated by man's avarice and grandiosity, and so have become an agent of diminishment (disease).

These universally relatable primordial images serve as a gauge against which to measure real life experience, totems to expand our concept of what is possible. It is when we attempt to concretize that image, to embody it in a human being that problems develop, because the promise of “extraordinary potency” is just too seductive for most people to resist. Jung said,

It is indeed hard to see how one can escape the sovereign power of the primordial images. Actually I do not believe it can be escaped. One can only alter one's attitude and thus save oneself from naively falling into an archetype and being forced to act a part at the expense of one's humanity. Possession by an archetype turns a man into a flat collective figure, a mask behind which he can no longer develop as a human being, but becomes increasingly stunted.⁵²

Historically these *mana* personalities, or charismatic individuals, seem to have developed in all societies, in all circumstances, appearing as artists, generals, politicians, spiritual or intellectual leaders, saints, or sinners. We only need look at the pomp and panoply of royalty, of the church, of the military, or the medicine man in his mask, to see that construction of the appearance of power is probably as old as mankind.

The *mana* (extraordinary power) belongs to archetypes. When the ego becomes a “pretender to the throne” by identifying

with the archetype, the mana does not transfer to the ego, although the appearance of mana applies. But yet the archetype is rendered impotent or irrelevant, its mana having been stolen. Actually, the archetype continues to express its potency, but as an autonomous complex through the inflated ego.

The mental gymnastics that make it possible to believe in our projections and to identify with our fantasies is dissociation, the ability to divide and compartmentalize our consciousness.

Dissociation

Cohen⁵³ organizes dissociation into four essential exclusions: *not me* (signaling the development of separate parts); *not now* (characterizing incapacity to remain in or experience the present); *not then* (indicating disavowal of personal history); and *not ever* (identifying lack of hope, even of future orientation). This provides a graphic way of visualizing the process of denying my self, my essence past, present, and future. At the extreme, this describes a psychic death experience, annihilation.

The waking ego is masterful at, in a given moment, focusing on one point of view and putting the array of others “out of mind”. When one is concentrating on a mentally challenging task, it is useful to reduce awareness of the sounds and sights in the room, as well as other competing thoughts, memories, plans, etc. We do this all the time; dissociation is a natural phenomenon. Complexes that are associated with the waking ego can be called on as needed, and can spring into action in appropriate situations. Here the ego absorbs the complex and identifies with it (“This is me, too”). Some complexes are dissociated from the ego and more associated with the shadow or the anima/animus. When they “spring into action”, it comes as a surprise to the ego and may be experienced more like being possessed by it (“I must have been out of my mind”).⁵⁴

An altered state of consciousness, i.e., the state when the ego and its persona step aside, provides access to complexes that otherwise tend to be outside the realm of the waking ego’s self-image or self-identity. This could mean encounters with a revived child state, or with an angry sub-personality, with a suppressed homosexual tendency, or with a wise counsel within. Such access requires an ego and persona resilient enough to be willing to step aside. This willingness is usually present in the

dream state, when the waking ego is least active. An added layer of ego-protection is provided through disguising the complexes in various symbolic or metaphorical forms.

The states of consciousness activated in active imagination and hypnosis offer the same access as dreams, but with the benefit of a dual-awareness with both the complexes *and* the waking ego. By keeping the ego present, although dissociated sufficiently to allow entry to the unconscious complexes, an individual is capable of interaction between the ego and the relevant complexes. The terrified child complex can obtain support from the waking ego, and the ego in turn can enter into compassionate dialogue with an angry sub-personality.

The persona and waking ego must be willing to step aside, to partially dissociate, in order for the altered state to occur. If they are resistant to stepping aside, they become an impediment to entering the altered state. Once that bridge is crossed, the next task in our facilitation is to selectively access the complexes we wish to work with, those that lie beneath repetitive self-sabotaging patterns in the client's current life. We gain access to unconscious complexes, ones that the ego has not identified with, by evoking particular affect-ego states associated with a complex. We use the affect bridge technique⁵⁵ of gathering up the qualities of the specific state selected, and guiding the individual directly to that complex. For example, if the client (through an autonomous complex) is overly passive in relationships with authority, we might have her go to a recent time when she experienced that intimidation with a boss or teacher or coach. Armed with a clear description of the emotional tone involved (e.g., afraid of being yelled at, ashamed of being so easily bullied, etc.) and the somatic experience of it (e.g., feeling a little dizzy, feeling a gnawing tightness in the pit of the stomach, etc.), we simply suggest to the client that he/she is going back to the source of this set of experiences. It is a "Google search" through the archives of implicit and explicit memories, for which the human mind is ideally suited.

Because complexes are patterns formed with strong emotions, distinct somatic experiences, and infantile black-or-white beliefs, we use these qualities as key words in the search. "Go back to a time early in your life when you felt intimidated, afraid of being yelled at, ashamed of being so easily bullied,

when you felt dizzy, had the feeling of a gnawing tightness in the pit of your stomach.” And the mind, guided through the internal self-healing programming that Jung called the *transcendent function*, returns to the exact point in development (or one of them) in which the split took place which resulted in formation of the complex. Perhaps our client journeys back to an experience at age five of feeling shamed and threatened by her kindergarten teacher when she was unable to tie her shoes. She revivifies the five-year-old ego state, now the hypnotic ego, and brings in a corrective experience to empower her five-year-old ego state to speak up assertively, to demand respect from the teacher, and in the process to reclaim a sense of self-worth and dignity that had disappeared in the traumatic “fog of war”. Now that the conflicts within the passive child complex have begun to resolve, the waking ego inherits the empowerment, and our client’s adult experiences more assertiveness and self-confidence.

Is hypnosis necessary for this client to revivify the originating traumatic event? No, of course not. However, the ease of dissociation in hypnotic trance allows for relatively easy access to complexes that the ego does not identify as self. It also allows the hypnotic ego to oscillate its identity between two poles of a “bipolar” complex. For instance, the client caught up in a negative father complex, a rebellious son who inevitably encounters the father in every authority, can enter into and identify with the rebellious son pole of the complex. Perhaps he returns to a young age-regressed ego state in which he experienced being controlled by his father, and corrects the experience through empowerment. Then it may be useful to more fully explore the complex by doing an unconscious Google search on the qualities of his experience as the authority, finding the source of the other pole of that bipolar complex, and bringing resolution to it as well. Now the waking ego inherits more self-assurance when dealing with an authority, and more compassion when dealing with a subordinate.⁵⁶

Active imagination, dream work, psychodrama, and hypnosis are all examples of an altered state of consciousness that provides simultaneous or rhythmic access to the unconscious, oscillation of identity between waking ego and imaginal egos. This access offers a decided advantage in

identifying and working with complexes within the psyche. The dream ego, or the imaginal ego in hypnotherapy or active imagination, is not identified with the array of complexes that are the actual structure of the waking ego, which must contain and mediate them. This accounts for the neutral point of view available to the dream or imaginal ego, relative to the waking ego. The altered state ego is less defended and more loosely identified with a historic self-image. There is a natural fluidity to moving into and out of various complexes, and to recognizing the relationship between them. The phenomenon of self-hypnosis brings into focus this fluidity, where there is an active ego and a recipient or passive ego engaging one another.

Each of these methods shares a similar need for containment, provided by a strong ego complex or a safe and competent facilitator, or both. The Jungian term for this containment is *temenos*. The therapist provides containment through unconditional acceptance, of course, and through carrying the client's projections without reacting. There are differences between these altered states as well, related primarily to the extent to which the waking ego identity remains present and aware even while unconscious complex identities step in and out. In hypnotherapy in particular, from a Jungian point of view,

the hypnotherapist temporarily assumes the responsibility of the ego itself to maintain coherence among the tacit components of its structure, allowing components that are ordinarily tacit to be experienced in a focal manner. . . . In hypnotherapy, as in dreams, it is possible in many cases to exert a profound effect on the complexes that are the tacit structure of the waking ego itself. This is essentially the same mechanism that occurs through transference/countertransference effects (and their interpretation) in classical one-to-one psychoanalysis, in interpersonal form in process group psychotherapy, or in enactment techniques such as psychodrama, gestalt therapy, and sandtray.⁵⁷

Purposeful dissociation

Jung cautioned that “it often seems advisable to speak less of *my* anima or *my* animus and more of *the* anima and *the* animus.”⁵⁸ James Hillman echoes the sentiment:

To speak of *my* anima and *my* soul expresses the personalistic fallacy. Although these archetypal experiences of the personal give salt and substance to my personal individuality, making me feel that there is indeed a soul, this ‘me-ness’ is not mine. To take such experiences literally as mine puts the anima inside me and makes her mine. The more profoundly archetypal my experiences of soul, the more I recognize how they are beyond me, presented to me, a present, a gift, even while they feel my most personal possession.⁵⁹

Thus, a great deal is lost when these mighty archetypes (anima, animus, soul, Yin, Yang, Gods and Goddesses, Justice, Kindheartedness, mana personalities) are “drastically downsized” and regarded as residing in us.⁶⁰

Our egos have a range of perspectives, ranging from “I, me, mine” to something more akin to “We, us, ours”. The first case is the most common; it is the everyday experience of self caught up in “What needs to be done?” and “How will I do it?” It is that part of us that considers itself to be captain of the ship and master of its own destiny, that denies and silences any other perspectives within, any multiplicity within the personality or any interdependent connections with “the other”. We could call this aspect of our personality the everyday ego, the waking ego, the in-charge ego, the isolated ego, or (as it sees itself) *the heroic ego*. This heroic ego is trapped in a mire of conditioned beliefs, arrested developments, unrecognized introjections, and surrounded by its own projections – it has not yet awakened from its “anaesthetized slumber of subjectivism”⁶¹, preoccupied with itself. We could call this aspect of ourselves the *colonizing ego* because it sees its exploitation and oppression of the other residents of the psyche as legitimate and in fact as pre-ordained.⁶² And yet the heroic ego is on a journey toward transforming into something grander, healthier, more creative and authentic.

The ego at the other end of the spectrum, which we have called *the future self* and here will name *the imaginal ego* (after James Hillman⁶³), is open to recognizing a deep multiplicity within, and the meaningful existence of “others” among all the realms. “We are in this together.” “Aho, Mitakuye Oyasin” (*We Are All Related* in the words of the Lakota Souix). When people thoroughly enjoy themselves, when they experience the best moments in their lives, they tend to describe the experience as including concentration, absorption, deep involvement, joy, a sense of accomplishment.⁶⁴ This is a form of dissociation quite different from the escape form of dissociation, and is called *purposeful* or *directed dissociation*.^{65,66} This is actually a softening of the boundaries of the self, allowing consciousness to dissociate from the ordinary identification with personality (“I, me, mine”) and at the same time to recognize a far expanded

identity (“We, us, ours”) with additional beings, additional time perspectives, and additional realms.

In *The Red Book*⁶⁷, Jung recognizes the necessity of the “murder of the hero” in order that the individual find his own way, his own meaning. As long as one is possessed by a hero, i.e., identified with the in-charge rational ego and preoccupied with the workaday external world, the path to the true self is not only obscured but shanghaied to the pursuit of pleasure, status, duty, and self-sufficiency. This hero, Jung asserts, must be sacrificed because it rests on the foundation of ego inflation, and on a “cult of consciousness” which stipulates that value and meaning arise only through the conscious mind to the exclusion of the deep feminine unconscious. What must be sacrificed is the view that certain things *are good*, certain acts *are necessary*, and that certain goals *must be attained*.⁶⁸ The “murder of the hero” is to interrupt the waking ego’s domination of the psyche. Jung said, “it is the function of Eros to unite what Logos has sundered”.⁶⁹ Or in other words, “The path to Self is through the Father; the path to No Self is through the Mother.”⁷⁰

The intellect and strength of the Father, who represents security in this material condition, helps to prepare each person for the frightening insecurity of the journey toward what has been described as ‘No Self.’ To express this in another way, it may be said that one of the roles of the Father is to lead the Child gently to the edge of the unknown, to the borders of the often wonderful and often terrifying Kingdom of the Mother. The principle here is that although the parents protect and guide, they force the Child into danger and trial which, when overcome, brings absolute independence.⁷¹

To facilitate the heroic ego’s journey toward transforming into a healthier, more authentic ego, we need to understand what supports the heroic ego’s single-minded pursuit of control and power, and self-deceptive belief that it is supremely in control. The heroic ego is both “the murderer and the murdered”.⁷² By what means does it resist the transformation?

- dissociation
- psychic numbing
- ‘doubling’
- artificial happiness
- traumatic shock

Through these means we manage incompatible emotions and experiences in the world. We divide up, compartmentalize, and insulate experience that is intolerable in its entirety. “Whereas DSM-validated dissociative disorders are associated with about 5% of the population, this other kind of dissociation is reflected in the tuning out, black-and-white thinking, and lack of in-the-worldness detectable at all levels of society.”⁷³ This is, in other words, more than individual pathology; it is a pervasive social and cultural conspiracy.

Robert Lifton uses the term *dissociative field* to describe “an environment within which a collective pattern of dissociation is rendered not only ‘normal’ but ‘expectable,’ even required. Such a field is maintained by *psychic numbing* and by . . . *doubling*.”⁷⁴ Doubling refers to a person’s capacity to move in and out of two different concepts of self without experiencing contradiction; for example, we might feel compassion for a homeless person on the sidewalk as we walk into the bank to apply for a mortgage.

Ronald Dworkin writes in his book *Artificial Happiness* that there is now a whole class of people in our society who live in a state of artificial happiness, induced either with psychotropic drugs or self-deceptive beliefs, or both. The distinctive feature of artificial happiness is “its power to resist life.” The problem is that people who are artificially happy “don’t feel the unhappiness they need to feel to move forward with their lives;” they “lose the impulse to change,” they “stay in their old ruts, stagnate in a pool of sham happiness, and sacrifice any chance for the real thing.”⁷⁵

We may conceal pathology behind the facade of normality⁷⁶, and “discover that the hoarding of soul within interiority has served a defensive function, protecting us from the tragedies and travesties in our midst.”⁷⁷ Indigenous peoples throughout history and cultures have recognized “the soul” as belonging to the community, as a hollow place of great potential at the center, for the purpose of feeding the whole. The imaginal ego recognizes extensive multiplicity within, and intricate connectedness with all that is “other”. The hypnotic trance state commonly provides an individual with just such an expanded perspective on self-identity.

Each of these strategies for escape from reality itemized here rests on dissociation, and is in fact an estrangement from oneself,

embodied in the person's nervous system, and requires what we call *shock* to maintain. The shock state depends on a withdrawal of identity into the "I, me, mine" *heroic ego* (which is, of course, dissociated); the antidote is to become re-associated to the world outside of that narrow identity, in a vastly expanded *imaginal ego*. We reactivate the anesthetized mind and reawaken the shocked out nervous system when we reacquaint ourselves with myth and timeless ideas, soul-making and imagination, and explore the depths of not just "my" unconscious but more so "our" collective unconscious or "the" collective unconscious.

Certain complexes arise on account of painful or distressing experiences in a person's life, experiences of an emotional nature which leave lasting psychic wounds behind them. A bad experience of this sort often crushes valuable qualities in an individual. All these produce unconscious complexes of a personal nature.... But there are others that come from quite a different source...the collective unconscious. At bottom they are irrational contents of which the individual had never been conscious before.... So far as I can judge, these experiences occur...when something so devastating happens to the individual that his whole previous attitude to life breaks down.⁷⁸

The antidote to dissociation

Now what undoes the dissociation, numbing, and shock, i.e., accomplishes the "murder of the hero", in order to bring the individual into his/her imaginal ego/ future self? On the level of healing the damage done by trauma, we undo dissociation by engaging the hippocampus in order to provide context and containment for experiences that have been laid down in memory directly by the amygdala, trapped in alarm and intolerable fear. In a similar but far more expansive way, we undo the pervasive dissociation plaguing the heroic ego with *associational* experiences, such as

- widening focus beyond the individual *me* and *mine*
- depth engagement, or "noticing"
- dialogue and listening
- reflection and reverie
- dream work

One of the foundational features of ego development is a focus that grows beyond the *intrapsychic* to recognition of context that includes community, culture, history, and environment. The sadness I experience is not always *mine*, and the solutions to problems I encounter are not always *mine*. The

healing that results from my interventions is never *mine*. The “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” speech that Dr. Martin Luther King gave the night before his assassination is an exemplary example of the towering perspective that placed the immediate struggle in Memphis into a context of thousands of years of human experience across numerous cultures and clarified its implications far beyond the local “I, me, mine” or even the parochial “We, us, ours” of Memphis sanitation workers. He recognized the vast significance of the “everyday” events – societal, cultural, historical, spiritual – that his experiences went beyond him, were a gift presented to him. To accomplish this, he needed for his consciousness to be fully present, wide awake, and expanded. And he needed to be aware of all the introjects that could potentially influence that consciousness – not just the personal ones from parents or teachers, but the more subtle ones from society, the lack of in-the-worldness carried in the cultural dissociative field.

We know as clinicians the importance of paying close attention to the other (and at the same time to ourselves) without overfocusing or narrowing the attention onto something at the expense of missing other details – noticing dream images, body sensations, memories, omissions, slips of the tongue. Call it “evenly hovering attention” (Freud) or “noticing” (James Hillman). “Noticing involves a gift of careful attention that is sustained, patient, subtly attuned to images and metaphors, tracking both hidden meanings and surface presentations.”⁷⁹ The imaginal ego extends this capacity to notice beyond one’s own internal landscape, and beyond focus on the internal landscape of another, all the way to a deep engagement with the world itself – the world of other cultures, of nature, of other life forms, of invisible energies, of archetypes and demons and divinities.

The currency of noticing is listening and dialogue. The heroic ego rejects listening as trivial, and dismisses dialogue – it is preoccupied with its own incessant monologue. And we know that messages unlistened to, or unheeded, reappear as symptoms and pathology. “The methodology for understanding and healing in Jung and Hillman calls for an attempt to bracket the dominating and oppressive aspects of the ego, making space for the unlistened-to and the silenced to speak directly. One turns to the margins of awareness, to greet and coax other points of view

into dialogue, and to listen to what has been voiced but unheeded.”⁸⁰ The human being needs time-outside-of-time, which we experience in dream sleep, in waking consciousness through reflection and reverie, and in the state of hypnosis.

Through the mediation of the subject’s spontaneous images, the hypnotherapist (and indeed the subject as well) is in dialogue with the patient’s own unconscious, which has the dignity and autonomy of a separate center of subjectivity. This autonomy of the psyche is clearly evident in dreams. It is the central indicator of authentic active imagination, and it should be the hallmark of Jungian hypnotherapy.⁸¹

Accessing time-outside-of-time on the margins of awareness, making contact with separate centers of subjectivity, requires one to journey deep into the recesses of the unconscious. And one of the brilliant innovations by Jung is to recognize the layers of the human unconscious. Before proceeding to a discussion of active imagination and its relationship with hypnotherapy, we present a brief overview of Jung’s schemata of the unconscious.

Psyche – Soma: Psychic Unconscious – Somatic Unconscious

Jung expanded the concept of the unconscious beyond that developed by Freud. More than simply the receptacle of unacceptable drives, the unconscious is a vast living habitat for energies both psychic and somatic, personal and collective.

So defined, the unconscious depicts an extremely fluid state of affairs: everything of which I know, but of which I am not at the moment thinking; everything of which I was once conscious but have now forgotten; everything perceived by my senses, but not noted by my conscious mind; everything which, involuntarily and without paying attention to it, I feel, think, remember, want, and do; all the future things that are taking shape in me and will sometime come to consciousness: all this is the content of the unconscious.⁸²

The *personal unconscious* contains lost memories, painful ideas that are repressed (i.e., forgotten on purpose), subliminal perceptions, by which are meant sense-perceptions that were not strong enough to reach consciousness, and finally, contents that are not yet ripe for consciousness.⁸³

The *collective unconscious* contains the whole spiritual heritage of mankind’s evolution, born anew in the brain structure of every individual.⁸⁴

Jung theorizes that if the entire psyche, including conscious and unconscious contents, could be viewed objectively, from afar, a continuum of psychic life would fit the following schemata, which he associates with the spectrum of light. Jung

compares the realm of the psychic (ego-consciousness and the unconscious) to the light spectrum. At the infrared end, the psychic functions change into the instincts and physiological processes, which take on a more and more compulsive character. At the other, ultraviolet end of the scale are the archetypes, psychic structures that precondition our fantasies and ideas by producing symbolic images.⁸⁵

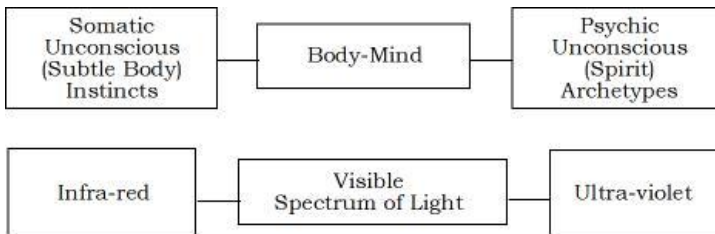


Figure 1: Jung's Schemata of the Psyche

The images which arise from the unconscious tend to be bold, dramatic, with a striking reality that contain both instinct and spirit. When they manifest more of their instinctual origins (soma), these images may be experienced sensually with color, sound, smell, or feeling. When their psychic components predominate (psyche), they may appear more formally as an animal, person, god, or geometric design.

The psychic and somatic (psyche and soma) “are two systems, but their interaction is so intricate and complex, and for the most part buried so deeply in the unconscious, that it is difficult to define where one begins and the other leaves off.”⁸⁶

The unconscious also contains *psychoid* functions that are not capable of consciousness and of which we have only indirect knowledge, such as the relationship between matter and spirit.

Splitting is the dissociation of aspects of the conscious psyche from other aspects of the conscious psyche, or from aspects of the unconscious. It is an archaic defense most clearly observable in psychopathology; however, fundamentally splitting is a normal phenomenon which allows various parts of the personality to specialize in a set of behaviors. “The tendency

to split means that parts of the psyche detach themselves from consciousness to such an extent that they not only appear foreign but lead an autonomous life of their own. It need not be a question of hysterical multiple personality, or schizophrenic alterations of personality, but merely of so-called ‘complexes’ that come entirely within the scope of the normal.”⁸⁷ Splitting allows for the formation of persona, shadows, and ultimately of complexes.

Complexes are in fact splinter psyches. “The aetiology of their origin is frequently a so-called trauma, an emotional shock or some such thing, that splits off a bit of the psyche. Certainly one of the commonest causes is a moral conflict, which ultimately derives from the apparent impossibility of affirming the whole of one’s nature.”⁸⁸ These complexes over time become more and more autonomous, determining themselves when to step in and usurp the executive function from the ego. “Everyone knows nowadays that people ‘have complexes.’ What is not so well known, though far more important theoretically, is that complexes can *have us*.”⁸⁹

Recognition of these two realms within the unconscious brings with it the potential to establish collaboration between them. This is the purview of integrative medicine, and one of the most exciting benefits of utilizing hypnosis in psychosomatic healing.

Exploring this inner geography is the work of psychology, and was advanced significantly by Carl Jung. It is one thing to intellectually discover aspects of oneself, to analyze them. It is quite another to encounter and recognize them as independent energies that live within, capable of an autonomous life of their own, and to begin a dialogue with them. Whatever means of exploration that offers access to such a meaningful encounter is richly valuable: for most people an altered state is required, such as dreams, active imagination, or hypnotic trance. “Who tastes, knows,” is a Sufi saying. Equally, “whoever does not taste, does not know.”⁹⁰

Active imagination

Jung recommends the use of active imagination as his principal method of establishing contact with and stabilizing the unconscious image: “a dreaming the dream forward that aims to

objectify the affects and confront consciousness with them”.⁹¹ Reaching into the invisible realm of the imaginal, we invite those energies encountered to dialogue. We do this in hypnotherapy when we ask a body part or sensation to speak: when a client becomes acutely aware of a pain in one leg or a tension in the groin, the therapist may suggest, “Give that sensation a voice: ‘I am the pain in your leg and I am here to tell you . . .’” This is a standard Gestalt therapy technique. Other examples of active imagination type experiences (or perhaps amplification of “dreamlike” material) in hypnotherapy might be:

- speaking with a deceased loved one
- calling on archetypal resources for help with healing
- interacting with elements from a dream
- making contact with inner masculine or feminine through recognizing the significance of symptoms or sensations located on the right or left side of the body, or in gender-specific areas of the body
- giving voice to child parts, or aspects of one’s psyche that we might label shadow or complex
- rehearsal with an imagined other (either someone actually in the client’s life who can be imaginally conjured during the session, or someone who is imagined as a potential interactant for practice purposes).⁹²

Active imagination is a process whereby the images of the archetypes can be formed, actively produced or incubated by the ego⁹³; the resulting beings are related to as objective real others; and then an inner drama or dialogue between equals is allowed to develop verbally, or through writing, painting, drawing, or movement. We are engaged in *unconscious active imagination* most of the time, in which the unconscious figures wield great influence, albeit invisibly, on the ego’s attempt to live life. Here we have a method of bringing the interactions into consciousness. Three questions come to mind:

1. How do we know whether our imaginal encounters are *active imagination* or something else (like reverie, fantasy, daydreaming, meditation)? Active imagination and meditation lead to consciousness of the self; the others to enhancement of the ego. Fantasy and

daydreaming create illusion and distract us from reality; active imagination or meditation create illumination and clarify reality. Fantasy deals with the ego's needs and desires, while imagination transcends the ego to provide insight into the nature of the self.⁹⁴ Imagination is therefore a concentrated extract of the life forces, both physical and psychic.⁹⁵ Imagination leads to new, unexpected information.

2. How do we know *who* we have encountered in active imagination, and what is the nature of its relationship to me, the one consciously actively imagining? Sometimes these interlopers from the psychoid realm are a representation of an aspect of the individual me (e. g., my depression, my fear of getting old, my split-off compulsive desires, a potential self that never took the chance, my needy seven-year-old, or a "pain in the neck" shadow). Sometimes it is a representation of an individual *other than me* (e. g., a child who was never conceived, a "lost soul" desperately confused after dying unprepared, an attachment, or the thought forms of someone who is directing a psychic attack or psychic seduction toward me). Sometimes it is a representation of our *interpersonal* experience (the third thing that is created when the gestalt of your conscious/unconscious reality interacts with mine); for example, a mutually created "inevitable future" that takes on a life of its own, feeding from and controlling both of us. Sometimes it is a representation of an energy or force that exists in the deep collective unconscious, e. g., a "power animal", an elemental force such as the Wind or the "standing people" (trees), an archetypal force such as Integrity or Revenge or Despair, or a spiritual entity either angelic or malevolent or mischievous.

In *Healing Fiction*, James Hillman asks how can we distinguish between "the call" and "the complex." Is the image a god or a demon, an archetypal presence or a personal complex? This is a critical distinction as it determines our right relationship to the image.

3. Do we engage in such a dialogue for our own benefit, for the benefit of the one encountered, or both? The

psychoidal beings need our consciousness to evolve just as we need theirs. “Archetypal energies do not personalize without a person to receive their projection and then to transmute the *prima materia* into something useable.”⁹⁶ Martin Prechtel is a Mayan shaman who reminds us of the universal indigenous truth:

If this world were a tree, then the other world would be the roots — the part of the plant we can't see, but that puts the sap into the tree's veins. . . . The Mayans say that the other world sings us into being. We are its song. We're made of sound, and as the sound passes through the sieve between this world and the other world, it takes the shape of birds, grass, tables — all these things are made of sound. Human beings, with our own sounds, can feed the other world in return, to fatten those in the other world up, so they can continue to sing. . .⁹⁷

The psychoid has to do with an area of experience where bodily sensations are symbolic, i.e., psychosomatic metacommunications, both individually at an intrapsychic level of life, but also around and between us in relationships. This realm of experience is one of deep regression and primary process, where the capacity to distinguish inner and outer, subject and object, fantasy and reality is blurred; the realm of paradox. Here we meet the instinctual, animal, primordial within — the archetypes that *animate* us. Try as we might, we cannot force the pre-verbal, pre-cognitive into the rational and conceptual. We must accept it as *precognition*, for in this timeless realm past and future are also irrelevant. We are creating a life made out of raw materials mined in the psychoid realm. And in large measure, creating that life, or self, is “localized in the body”; the body and the psyche then evolve a “psychosomatic partnership”.⁹⁸ If the partnership is antagonistic or neglectful, a split occurs that requires healing.

And the engineer that orchestrates the mining and the building, the overarching archetypal presence Jung called the Self, easily navigates the world of everyday consciousness and that of the psychoidal unconscious. Those raw materials include a wide range of experience, from chaotic confusion and fragmented dissociation to intimate transcendent oneness.

An analogy for this relationship can be found in the Biblical story of the Apostle Paul, who knew and experienced the risen Jesus in a way that he clearly distinguished from the physical realm.⁹⁹ The earliest written record of the resurrection of Jesus is

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, written around two decades after the death of Jesus. Paul says that Jesus appeared to him as he also appeared to his first followers after the crucifixion. He distinguishes the body with which we are born from the body with which Jesus and others are "resurrected." He uses the word "physical" to describe our space-time bodies and the word "spiritual" to describe our "resurrected" bodies.¹⁰⁰ He says that the physical body is "perishable" but the spiritual body is "imperishable," and that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."¹⁰¹

Paul was familiar with "visions" and wrote of his experience with Jesus and other spiritual beings while he was in what he called a "trance."^{102,103} Incidentally, the Apostle Peter also had "trance" experiences.¹⁰⁴

It is the job of the ego complex to sort through, comprehend, and assimilate these incomprehensible experiences and create a life. And so primal forces become personified as archetypes (hero, Mother, King, orphan, prophet, God, etc.). Experience is separated into mutually exclusive categories (good and bad, introvert and extravert, masculine and feminine, etc.). It is the ego's job also to sort through, comprehend, and assimilate these same interlopers from the psychoid realm in our *interpersonal* experience (the third thing that is created when the gestalt of your conscious/unconscious reality interacts with another's). And it is the formidable task of the therapist/healer's ego to do both of these jobs in a way that is neutral and nurturing for the other, the client or patient.

An example of the psychoid at work in one's life is psychosomatic symptoms which harken back to the individual's preverbal means of communicating. Daniel Stern makes a distinction between what may be called *category* affects such as anger, sadness, joy, fear, disgust, etc. and *vitality* affects which cannot be classified in terms of these readily recognizable emotions, as they do not have names and will be highly individual. Stern describes them in terms of their kinetic qualities: "these elusive qualities are better captured by dynamic, kinetic terms, such as 'surging', 'fading away', 'fleeting', 'explosive', 'crescendo', 'decrescendo', 'bursting', 'drawn out' and so on. . . it is these feelings which will be elicited by changes in motivational states, appetites and tensions".¹⁰⁵ These are

patterns put in place in infancy and very early in childhood. Psychosomatic patients may be suffering from particular disturbances in vitality affects¹⁰⁶, which may be thought of as embedded body memories, or “shock states”.¹⁰⁷

Whenever as facilitators we encounter shock states, we must be prepared to intervene in the pattern. That means, for example, interrupting a client whose abreactive expression of emotion is actually sympathetic shock (someone yelling, hitting down, and expressing anger, yet that is not actually dissipating or releasing the festering residue carried from the past into the present). It also means interrupting a client who has lost any ability to feel or express emotion, which is actually parasympathetic shock. In both cases we interrupt the shock pattern and introduce resources. The resource begins with an internal experience that can be identified and expanded. For sympathetic shock, the “time out” or “cool down” provided by a few quieting breaths, a sip of cool water, or ice on the neck or forehead, allows the client to access an inner calm, titrating the shock. For parasympathetic shock, the inner resource is an awareness of an activation of energy somewhere in the body that by focusing on it can be expanded into the remainder of the body, titrating the shock.

Another example of the psychoid at work in one’s life is the effect ‘nature’ has on a person’s conscious experience. The instinctual animates us. When a writer wants to conjure up fear in the reader, she may begin the story with “It was a dark and stormy midnight.” The forlorn melody of Taps affects most people by conjuring a poignant sadness. For almost anyone, a stunning sunrise conjures up inspiration, wonder, and experience of the transcendent. Spiritual rituals recognize the presence of the sacred in sensuous material: bread and wine transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ; grandfather rocks sacrificing themselves in the purifying fire of a Native American *inipi* (sweat lodge) ceremony.

Davidson¹⁰⁸ was perhaps the first to consider that the transference situation itself in Jungian analysis could be considered a form of active imagination, i.e., the analyst has a role in analytic therapy similar to that of the ego in active imagination. The analyst engages with the patient’s spontaneously arising material to encourage dialogue, and in this

way analysis becomes a “lived through form of active imagination.”¹⁰⁹

The hypnotherapist performs the same function, and hypnotherapy can also readily be observed to be a “lived through form of active imagination.”

In “formal” active imagination,¹¹⁰ various steps are essential ingredients.

The first, and foremost, is that an altered state of consciousness, an *abaissement de niveau mental* as Jung calls it, must occur. This can be considered a form of ‘ego receptivity’ as described in the hypnosis literature (Cwik, 1995). Here the ego is not in a purely active state that remains in a direct, cognitive thinking mode, a secondary processing mode as Freud would say. Nor is it in a purely passive state being invaded by unconscious contents as in sleep or hallucinations. It is ‘receptive’ to more subtle material arising from the unconscious and the body in various forms; it is more sensitive to primary process.¹¹¹

This is a state of reverie, also obtained through hypnotic trance. And here the transcendent function is at work.

The integration of hemispheric functioning may be analogous or even similar to the transcendent function. Jung described two ways for the transcendent function to express itself – the ‘way of creative formulation’ (undirected thinking, metaphorical language) and the ‘way of understanding’ (science, concepts, words). The former is associated with the right and the latter with the left hemispheres.¹¹²

Achieving an altered state is necessary in order for the process to proceed, because the altered state is catalyst to one’s receptivity to the unconscious imagery. But clinical reports show that the most common problem in depth psychological work is blocked imagery.¹¹³ The framework of hypnotherapy provides a very useful vehicle for accessing the needed altered state, one that integrates the ‘way of creative formulation’ and the ‘way of understanding’, the feminine and the masculine, the path to No Self and the path to Self. And, like any of the vehicles for accessing the depths of one’s being, resistance is likely.

After millennia of deification of the sky gods— the mind, light, the ‘masculine,’ and Apollonian reason and order— we are now asked to embrace this descending spirituality, to reclaim the exiles of the ‘Dark Feminine’— the earth, instincts and body, as well as the Dionysian, erotic turmoil of the inner world they bring. We are being called to reclaim these cast-off parts of ourselves that also include sacred sensuality, sexuality, as well as the mysteries of birth, death, and resurrection.¹¹⁴

In active imagination, the inner image is then focused on and followed, concretized in some form, and dialogued with.

Active imagination does for many people access content toward the psychic end of the unconscious spectrum, appearing to depend far more on insight than on the somatic experience of the sense of self. This is perhaps less so when it is enacted through expressive movement or artistic expression. A common experience of individuals who access the unconscious through the gateway of hypnotherapy or shamanic journeying is that they are accessing content toward the somatic end of the unconscious spectrum, with vivid imagery and direct felt experiencing of the sensuality of self. Whether in the context of active imagination, dream work, or hypnotherapy, however, incorporating body and sense experience is vitally important. “The moment you leave sensing out of imagining, it is imagining that becomes sheer fantasy, mere imaginings, only a dream.”¹¹⁵

Jungian analyst Marion Woodman refers to the subtle body, the somatic unconscious, as the energy of the images.¹¹⁶ She believes we cannot long ignore the physiological component of the imaginal complex because it speaks its truth through the body, through soma. It irritates the body’s tissues and nerves and organs, it calls attention to itself through disturbing sensations and demanding body memories. She believes every complex has a bodily component that needs to be worked through until we are forced to bring it to consciousness. As long as the feeling tone of the image remains rooted in the body structure, the complex endures. We know that years of habitual tension prevent the body from releasing conflicts even after they have been resolved through insight. Work on both bodily tensions and mental attitudes can be accelerated by concentrating on the fertile meeting ground of the somatic and psychic unconscious.

Contact with the subtle body gives a sense of animation, vitality, intimacy, and vulnerability. These qualities, Jungian analyst Donald Kalsched observes, are notably missing in people who have suffered a splitting of body and mind through early trauma.¹¹⁷ For these people, the emotional or affective component of experience lodges in the body, while the imagery itself stays in the mind, leaving a gap in experience— often an inability to even recognize what is going on with the feelings or senses, and a dissociated confusion that inhibits insight.

In fact, one of the distinct advantages of hypnosis as a catalyst for active imagination or dream work is the dual focus that is generated on both physical sensation and psychical mentation. Direct access to both ends of the spectrum of the unconscious yields content from pre-verbal and pre-conscious levels, transpersonal and psychospiritual experiences. This can, for many people, “prime the pump” of the flow of imagery and unconscious material. “It is during these dark periods of no imagery that we most need to focus on the pre-conscious sensations that arise.”¹¹⁸

Hypnosis and shamanic journeying

Hypnosis and the hypnotic trance state are integral aspects of most shamanic practices.¹¹⁹ Both hypnotic trance and shamanic journey utilize the vast power of the human imagination, as well as the same dissociative state of consciousness. Neurophysiologically, the brain wave pattern created through hypnotic trance is essentially identical to that created through shamanic journeying; also the experiential phenomena of a shamanic journey (e.g., shapeshifting, contact with imaginal agents) can readily be replicated in a hypnotic trance.¹²⁰ Here is a description of the shamanic altered state of consciousness:

This normal brain response is reflected in synchronized brain wave patterns in the theta (3-6 cycles per second [cps]) and slow alpha (6-8 cps) range produced by activation of the limbic brain's serotonergic circuits to the lower brain. This results in synchronous brain wave discharges across the neuraxis (the nerve bundles linking the hierarchical strata of the brain). These slow wave discharges produce strongly coherent brain wave patterns that synchronize the frontal areas of the brain, integrating nonverbal information into the frontal cortex and producing insight.¹²¹

Incorporating shamanic practices accesses the psychoid realm¹²², and is facilitated by the use of clinical hypnosis:

- Clearing, indeed overriding the blueprint that is intergenerational and ancestral.
- Extraction of toxic intrusive energies, or entities, attached to an individual with whom they have unfinished business.
- Soul retrieval – returning to the original wounding, the source traumatic event to retrieve the resources that had become split or splintered. This can be in childhood, in

the womb, or in a past life, and one can also journey into the future to install a “potential self”.

- Initiations, rites of passage – puberty, marriage, divorce, motherhood, menopause, wisdom passages, death rites.

Following is a neuropsychological explanation of the process of visionary experience in the shamanic altered state of consciousness, which applies as well to the hypnotic state:

Shamanic ASCs [altered states of consciousness] involve intense visual experiences that reflect an innate representational system referred to as “presentational symbolism,” the same representational system reflected in dreams (Hunt, 1995). Shamanic visionary experiences are a natural brain phenomenon resulting from release of the normal habitual suppression of the visual cortex. These representations use the symbolic self-referential capacity in the imagetic-intuitive mode. Visions use the same brain substrates that process perceptual information, providing an integration of psychophysiological information with emotional levels, linking somatic and cognitive experience.¹²³

“Archetypal field” or “analytic third”

Therapists recognize the strong attraction people have to repeat behavior patterns regardless of whether that pattern yields desirable results or not. Freud called this phenomenon the *repetition compulsion*. Michael Conforti, a Jungian analyst, attributes the dynamics of this common trend to one’s complex, which

creates a kind of antenna around individuals tuning them in and aligning them with the specific frequency of an archetype. This tuning mechanism of the psyche determines which frequencies can be accessed and which will be tuned out. I suspect that many of us have gone through times when the issue we were dealing with was suddenly manifested in virtually every facet of our lives. This tuning is a complicated, fascinating, and surprisingly exacting phenomena. It works by creating alignments and entrainments with only those segments of life which match the constant of the constellated archetype. In other words only those themes and issues which resonant with the individual’s alignment of an archetype will be constellated¹²⁴

Most people have the experience of, when meeting new people at a party or conference, engaging in conversation focused on finding similarities with the other. Perhaps we have acquaintances in common, or share the same hobby or interests. There is an innate desire to make the unknown known, and beyond that to make it familiar. To do so allows one to rely on past experience and accumulated behavioral shortcuts, which

makes dealing with the unfamiliar easier. One way to conceptualize this is that an individual's given complex has a special relationship, is tuned to a given archetype, and attracts (activates or constellates) it to manifest. Victims attract rescuers. Rescuers attract persecutors. An "archetypal field" is created between those who are in relationship, and that field's orientation is determined by the specific archetype that lies at the core of each one's complexes. Our job as therapist is to bring to clear awareness the behavior patterns at work in the client's life, and underneath that the complex(es) involved, and within that the archetypal imagery at the core. Our job also is to be aware of the nature of the archetypal field established between us and the client, its influences on us and any resonance with our own complexes, in order to make transparent our countertransference. "By acknowledging that fields are transpersonally, and not personally, generated, we can begin to reestablish a relationship between ego consciousness and the transpersonal."¹²⁵

This field may be what Ogden¹²⁶ calls the *analytic third* to refer to a third subject, unconsciously co-created by analyst and analysand, which seems to take on a life of its own in the interpersonal field between therapist and patient. This archetypal field is intricately related to the field created in hypnosis between hypnotherapist and client. These are additional ways of conceptualizing this field:

- *Hypnogenic resonance* "is a place of *primary process mutuality* in which the analyst can find relevant meaning in its personal manifestations of eidetic imagery, vivid sounds, smells, or various kinesthetic sensations."¹²⁷
- *Interpenetrating mutuality* refers to the field of mutual experience between therapist and client that is more than intersubjective, more than co-created.¹²⁸ It is defined within the Hua-yen school of Buddhism as the dharma realm in which all occasions of reality are vividly retained and unified yet with its diversity intact.¹²⁹
- *Reverie* is a state where the unconscious material of analyst and patient can meet, a place of safety where images useful for the work can emerge. Wilfred Bion once said that "the nearer the analyst comes to achieving the suppression of desire, memory and understanding, the more likely he is to fall into a sleep akin to

stupor.”¹³⁰ Reverie includes the most commonplace and unobtrusive thoughts, feelings, fantasies, ruminations, daydreams and bodily sensations. Ogden notes that they usually feel “utterly disconnected from what the patient is saying and doing at the moment”.¹³¹

- *Hypnotic trance* is an altered state of consciousness in the subject and potentially shared by the hypnotherapist, in which the following phenomena commonly occur: dissociation between executive and monitoring function of the self; high frequency of ideodynamic behaviors (ideas which produce physiological responses in the body); extreme focusing of attention and mental absorption; facilitation of auto-referential thinking; direct access to implicit memory; changes in quality of time experience and perceptual experience.

Are the imaginal less “real” than the physical?

Ken Wilber’s integral map¹³² provides an amazing framework with which to think about the reality of what we encounter in the imaginal realm. His map posits four dimensions of reality, i.e., that which is “real”: (1) the gross body of physical objects, (2) the subtle body of thoughts, dreams, images, feelings, and subtle energetic forms, (3) the causal body of formless emptiness and (4) the nondual witness of the merging of the gross, subtle, and formless realms. The experiences of archetypal energies can be understood, within this framework, to be real in the *subtle body realm*. This includes dream elements, figures encountered in active imagination, spirits of natural phenomena such as fire or the wind, and energies captured in myths and fairy tales. Experiences with the *causal body realm* can occur in altered states, such as deep meditation, mystical states, shamanic journeys, or hypnotic trance. Such experiences might include contact with a deceased loved one, or encounters with angels or deity forms.

In *The Red Book*, Jung records many active imagination experiences with transpersonal energies. One set of imaginal figures that make a dramatic appearance¹³³ are an old man and a young woman. Jung reports that the old man says, “I am Elijah and this is my daughter Salome.” Jung recognizes her as the dancer who asked for the head of John the Baptist. Eventually

she will ask for Jung's head as well, by criticizing his tendency to intellectualize. It is understandable that Jung takes an immediate and fearful dislike of her, and is highly suspicious of the old man. When he calls the pair a symbol of extreme contradiction, the old man replies, "We are real and not symbols." And with immense personal struggle Jung comes to recognize them as real and not symbols.

And yet there is a need for the therapist to enforce a focus on consensus reality, too; to keep the fascination with imaginal reality from eclipsing the everyday. This applies to one's client, and to oneself as therapist. It is a particularly relevant concern within the fanciful psychical experiences common in hypnotherapy. Donald Kalsched uses the analogy of Dorothy and the Wizard of Oz to explain how one gets caught up with these transpersonal energies, and how we need to extricate ourselves from their enchantment.

The patient hasn't been in Kansas for a long time. The patient's been in Oz. And if you have a particular love for the unconscious and the imaginal and they suddenly open up their Oz world to you, it's very alluring and very exciting. Pretty soon you're talking about nothing but archetypal dreams and archetypal mythological motifs and all the rest of it. . . . What you find is that the patient's life in *this* world is usually crummy. They're pretty unadapted, they don't have an empowered place in their own lives. Frequently their relationships tend to be very short lived or terribly dependent. Sometimes they're addicted to various substances. So the problem, then, for a Jungian analyst or therapist swimming around in this wonderful archetypal world is, How do you get Dorothy back to Kansas?

To do that you have to see through the wizard. If you take *The Wizard of Oz* as an image, you have to depotentiate the wizard's power, and that has to do with seeing through the seductiveness of what I call the "system of fantasy," a substitute for the creative use of the imagination. This is the Self in its survival function. The wizard came on the scene because he helped the child survive. But now, after many travels along the yellow brick road, this person needs the capacity to imagine things about the *real* world and to use the power of the imagination actually to *be* creative. To live a creative life in creative relationship will mean a sacrifice, a giving up of the wizard and his power, and wizards don't like to give up their power! They are always quite cross about it. As a matter of fact, the really wicked wizards will try to dismember you when you decide that you no longer have need for them. So usually you have to work out a contract with them. You have to let them know that they've done a wonderful job up till now, that you're going to retire them with good severance pay and good retirement benefits, but they're no longer needed.¹³⁴

Hypnosis provides "the best of both worlds", accessing the Land of Oz *and* Kansas through a dual focus generated on both physical sensation and real world conflict as well as psychical

mentation and symbolic representation. These are the two ways for the transcendent function to express itself as described by Jung – the ‘way of creative formulation’ (undirected thinking, metaphorical language) and the ‘way of understanding’ (science, concepts, words). Hypnosis predictably establishes ego receptivity in which the suspension of disbelief is highly useful to navigating between these worlds. Hypnosis provides direct access to both ends of the spectrum of the unconscious, soma and psyche, yielding content from pre-verbal and pre-conscious levels, emotional and feeling tone experiences, and transpersonal and psychospiritual experiences.

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