

Lifespan [Academic Career] Development  
*Through a Jungian Lens*

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Addenda

***I. Ego, Self, Individuation: Some Defining Language***

***Ego/Self relationship:***

The ego cannot help discovering that the afflux of unconscious contents has vitalized the personality, enriched it and created a figure that somehow dwarfs the ego in scope and intensity. ... Naturally, in these circumstances there is the greatest temptation simply to follow the power-instinct and to identify the ego with the self outright, in order to keep up the illusion of the ego's mastery. ... [But] the self has a functional meaning only when it can act compensatorily to ego-consciousness. If the ego is dissolved in identification with the self, it gives rise to a sort of nebulous superman with a puffed-up ego. ["On the Nature of the Psyche," CW 8, par. 430.]

<https://frithluton.com/articles/self/>

***Reflecting on the nature of the Self:***

As an empirical concept, the self designates the whole range of psychic phenomena in man. It expresses the unity of the personality as a whole. But in so far as the total personality, on account of its unconscious component, can be only in part conscious, the concept of the self is, in part, only *potentially* empirical and is to that extent a postulate. In other words, it encompasses both the experienceable and the inexperienceable (or the not yet experienced). ... It is a *transcendental* concept, for it presupposes the existence of unconscious factors on empirical grounds and thus characterizes an entity that can be described only in part. ["Definitions," CW 6, par. 789.]

<https://frithluton.com/articles/self/>

### ***Symbolic representations of the Self:***

The Self appears in dreams, myths and fairy tales as a "superior personality", such as for example a king, a hero, a prophet, a savior. As symbol of the totality he appears as a circle, a square, a cross, a quadrangle of the circle or mandala. When it represents the unity of the opposites, it is a unified duality such as Tao - which contains the opposites yin-yang, the hero and his opponent (demon, dragon), Faust and Mephistopheles etc. In this case the opposites are united and represented as such through a sufficient totality, impossible to accomplish consciously. <https://www.carl-jung.net/self.html>

### ***The function of the Self:***

Finally, there is the **self** which provides a sense of unity in experience. For Jung, the ultimate aim of every individual is to achieve a state of selfhood (similar to self-actualisation), and in this respect, Jung (like Erikson) is moving in the direction of a more humanist orientation.

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/carl-jung.html>

### ***The nature of Individuation:***

The individuation is an autonomous process of accomplishing of the individual wholeness experienced as a psychological completeness. In Jung's terms, the individuation means the realization of the [Self](#), which is the conjunction of the conscious and the unconscious. In the practical accomplishment of this goal, the interpretation of the dreams plays a dominant role because dreams are the expression of the [unconscious](#), both of the personal and of the collective one.

[https://www.carl-jung.net/individuation\\_steps.html](https://www.carl-jung.net/individuation_steps.html)

### ***The goal of Individuation:***

It seems that the psyche tends towards a target beyond the conscious interests of the ego, located in a dimension about which the ego does not have any information or intuition.

[https://www.carl-jung.net/individuation\\_process.html](https://www.carl-jung.net/individuation_process.html)

### ***The process of Individuation:***

Once ego-differentiation had been successfully achieved and the individual is securely anchored in the external world, Jung considered that a new task then arose for the second half of life - a return to, and conscious rediscovery of, the Self: individuation. [Marie-Louise von Franz](#) states that "The actual processes of individuation - the conscious coming-to-term with one's own inner center (psychic nucleus) or Self--generally begins with a wounding of the personality".<sup>[5]</sup> The ego reaches an impasse of one sort or another; and has to turn for help to what she termed "a sort of hidden regulating or directing tendency...[an] organizing center" in the personality: "Jung called this center the 'Self' and described it as the totality of the whole psyche, in order to distinguish it from the 'ego', which constitutes only a small part of the psyche".<sup>[6]</sup>

Under the Self's guidance, a succession of archetypal images emerges,<sup>[7]</sup> gradually bringing their fragmentary aspects of the Self increasingly closer to its totality. The first to appear, and the closest to the ego, would be the [shadow](#) or personal unconscious - something which is at the same time the first representative of the total personality,<sup>[8]</sup> and which may indeed be at times conflated with the Self.<sup>[9]</sup> Next to appear would be the [Anima and Animus](#), the soul-image, which again, by a kind of psychological short cut, may be taken as identical to the whole Self.<sup>[10]</sup> Ideally, however, the animus or anima comes to play a mediatory role between the ego and the Self.<sup>[11]</sup> The third main archetype to emerge is the [Mana](#) figure of the wise old man/woman<sup>[12]</sup> - a representative of the collective unconscious still closer to the Self.<sup>[13]</sup>

Thereafter comes the archetype of the Self itself - the last point on the route to self-realization of individuation.<sup>[14]</sup> In Jung's words, "the Self...embraces ego-consciousness, shadow, anima, and collective unconscious in indeterminable extension. As a totality, the self is a *coincidentia oppositorum*; it is therefore bright and dark and yet neither".<sup>[15]</sup> Alternatively, he stated that "the Self is the total, timeless man...who stands for the mutual integration of conscious and unconscious".<sup>[16]</sup> Jung recognized many dream images as representing the self, including a stone, the [world tree](#), an elephant, and the Christ.<sup>[17]</sup>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self\\_in\\_Jungian\\_psychology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self_in_Jungian_psychology)

## ***II. Further reading***

### ***Ego inflation:***

C. G. Jung defined [ego] inflation...as expansion of the personality beyond its proper limits by identification with the persona or with an archetype...

[https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-1-4614-6086-2\\_330](https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-1-4614-6086-2_330)

**Two centres of personality:**

“What distinguishes Jungian psychology is the idea that there are two centers of the personality. The ego is the center of consciousness, whereas the Self is the center of the total personality.”

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self\\_in\\_Jungian\\_psychology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self_in_Jungian_psychology)

**Self definitions:**

“...the self...provides a sense of unity in experience. For Jung, the ultimate aim of every individual is to achieve a state of selfhood.”

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/carl-jung.html>

**Self: Unification of the individual's ego, personal and collective unconsciousness:**

<http://journalpsyche.org/jung-and-his-individuation-process/>

**Donald Super's five life and career development stages:**

Developmental tasks at the different stages

“Self-concept changes over time and develops as a result of experience.”

<https://www.careers.govt.nz/assets/pages/docs/career-theory-model-super.pdf>

**Books/articles:**

*Psychological Reflections*, C. G. Jung, Princeton Bollingen.

*The Transcendent Function*, Jeffrey C. Miller, SUNY.

*What Matters Most*, James Hollis, Gotham Books.

*The Undiscovered Self*, C. G. Jung, Berkley.

*The Origins and History of Consciousness*, Erich Neumann, Princeton Bollingen.

“Toward a Neuroscience of Adult Cognitive Developmental Theory”, F. Girgis, et al, *Front Neurosci.* 2018; 12: 4.

*The Psychology of C.G. Jung* <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.191209>

**III. Questions for Reflection**

Have you taken the academic risks you should have taken?

Would you welcome a different role in the university or the profession?

Have you given back sufficiently for society's and the profession's generosity toward you?

Do you have an unfulfilled talent or ambition?

**IV. Offering lectures, workshops, and resources**

C. G. Jung Society of Vancouver (Societies also in Victoria, Seattle and Portland)

<https://www.jungvancouver.org>