

## Topic Page: [Jung, Carl \(1875 – 1961\)](#)

Summary Article: **Jung, Carl**

From *The Encyclopedia of Positive Psychology*

Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961) was a Swiss psychiatrist and founder of analytical psychology. His influence continues to grow in many areas, such as psychological types, dream work, play therapy, and the role of spirituality and religion.

### **The Importance of Meaning**

The positive psychology of Viktor Frankl and Jung can be classified as depth positive psychology, because both of them emphasize the need to integrate the unconscious realm. Both can be considered fathers of contemporary positive psychology because of their focus on the innate human potential for growth through meaning and spirituality.

Graber (2004) wrote about Carl Jung: “He, like Frankl, saw the therapeutic possibilities of the human spirit – that is their strongest theoretic possibilities of the human spirit – that is their strong theoretic link” (p. 179). Thomas Peterson correctly pointed out that both Frankl and Jung emphasized the connection between meaning systems and mental health.

Jung (1933) stated:

*A psycho-neurosis must be understood as the suffering of a human being who has not discovered what life means for him. . . . The patient is looking for something that will take possession of him and give meaning and form to the confusion of his neurotic mind.*

(p. 225)

Like Frankl, Jung (1964) also recognized the value of meaning in suffering: “Man can stand the most incredible hardships when he is convinced that they make sense” (p. 76).

### **The Duality of Human Nature**

Probably influenced by Eastern philosophies and religions, Jung adopted a dualistic framework of psychology. Jung (1933) recognized that duality is the fact of human nature: “Every good quality has its bad side, and nothing that is good can come into the world without directly producing a corresponding evil. This is a painful fact.” (p. 199). One example of this duality is that we cannot achieve wholeness without integrating the dark side of the self.

The archetype of the *self* represents the center of the psyche and is commonly expressed by the symbol of a Mandala. The self signifies wholeness, the product of integrating the consciousness and unconscious aspects of the psyche through individuation. One cannot actualize selfhood without getting in touch with the *shadow*, the archetype of the dark and rejected parts of the self.

The shadow contains the libido, forbidden feelings such as lust and rage. The shadow wants to be acknowledged and brought into consciousness. Jungian analysts Zweig and Wolf point out if we embrace and “romance” the shadow, we will channel it to productive use and gain access to vitality and creativity.

It takes courage to undertake the “shadow work” because it can be painful to come to terms with

one's negative emotions and painful aspects of life, such as personal traumas and family secrets.

## Individuation – The Process Toward Wholeness

The process of individuation is to reconcile and integrate the various differentiated components into a coherent and balanced whole. Thus, it integrates the ego (center of consciousness) with the shadow, anima (the feminine personality characteristics) with the animus (the masculine characteristics), the rational (thinking and feeling) and irrational (sensing and intuition) psychic functions. This is an innate and natural process of human growth.

Individuation is essential for fulfilling one's full potentials and flourishing, but it is a painful process. One of the common themes in Jungian analysis is that just as there is no rebirth without death, there can be no wholeness without realizing our brokenness, and no self-actualization without suffering.

SEE ALSO: ► Humanistic psychology

### References

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