

Jungian psychology

Psychology



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Life is full of opposites, so it seems. Acceptance of these opposites and getting by is the challenge everybody faces. The way in which these opposites, the conflicting situations, the dilemmas faced are handled using various coping mechanisms reflects on the manifested behavior. The mix of opposites makes life so complex to understand and to experience. To understand the poem ' Ode on Melancholy' by Keats' in terms of Jungian's psychology, an understanding of the essence of the poem and the essentials of Jung is warranted. The Essence of Ode on Melancholy

The essence of Keats poem is that life is a combination of seemingly opposite states. By using various states like wakefulness, melancholy, joy, sorrow etc. , as metaphors Keats expresses the theme of life. Some of the sentences allude to this fact: the reward of the wakeful soul shall taste melancholy's sadness. One is part of and inevitably follows the other. Similarly there is a suggestion in the poem to indicate to try not to escape pain. And embrace the transient beauty and joy of the nature and human experience, which contain pain and death.

The Essence of Jungian Psychology The conscious and unconscious are always at play in the human self. The overarching goal of Jungian psychology is the reconciliation of the life of the individual with the world of the supra-personal archetypes(Fappani, n. d). Humans experience the unconscious through symbols/ imagery encountered in all aspects of life: in dreams, art, religion, and the symbolic dramas enacted in relationships and life pursuits. Jung describes various concepts like collective unconscious based on the imagery of memories, dreams, and shadows(Jung, 1989).

For Jung, an empirical investigation of the world of dream, myth, and soul represented the most promising road to deeper understanding and exploration of the unconscious. Things "known but unknown" are contained in the unconscious and dreams are one of the main vehicles for the unconscious to express them. Imagery – the common thread between the works of Jung and Keats If we look at the works of both, we see that both use the imagery extensively. As can be seen, much of the summary of Keats' poem derives from the concrete imagery.

Keats brings together elements like Melancholy and Joy which are ordinarily regarded as incompatible or as opposites. The poet also seems to suggest some remedies or ways to avoid the pain that melancholy may cause, as oblivion and death. This seems to be suggested in Jung's work of collective unconscious and the concept of Shadow. The collective unconscious is based on archetypes or models(Storr, 1983).

Just as all humans share a common physical heritage and predisposition towards specific gross physical forms (like having two legs, a heart, etc. so do all humans have innate psychological predispositions in the form of archetypes, which contains the collective unconscious. Self is the main archetype of the collective unconscious, as per Jung's thought. The subjective realm of archetypes can be revealed more fully through an examination of the symbolic communications of the human psyche — in art, dreams, religion, myth, and the themes of human relational/behavioral patterns. The unconscious, for Jungian analysts, may contain repressed sexual drives, but also aspirations, fears, etc.

According to Jung, the conscious psyche is an apparatus for adaptation and orientation, and consists of a number of different psychic functions mainly four basic functions: sensing, intuition, thinking, feeling. Thinking and feeling functions are rational, while sensing and intuition are nonrational. Reliable communication between the conscious and unconscious parts of the psyche is necessary for wholeness. Things "known but unknown" are contained in the unconscious, and dreams are one of the main vehicles for the unconscious to express them.

Shadow is an unconscious complex that is defined as the repressed and suppressed aspects of the conscious self. On the destructive side, it often represents everything that the conscious person does not wish to acknowledge within themselves. On the constructive side, the shadow may represent hidden positive influences. This has been referred to as "the gold in the shadow." Jung emphasized the importance of being aware of shadow material and incorporating it into conscious awareness, lest one project these attributes on others.

The shadow in dreams is often represented by dark figures of the same gender as the dreamer. According to Jung the human being deals with the reality of the Shadow in four ways: denial, projection, integration and/or transmutation. The use of a rain image, "heaven" as the source of melancholy; clouds "weeping," an appropriate action for melancholy; reference to flowers which are "droop-headed," a phrase having a double application- On a literal level, the rain has caused them to droop.

On a figurative level, "droop-headed" connotes sadness, grief; the rain temporarily hides the view or hill; however the hill is green, connoting

fertility, lushness, beauty, aliveness, and it retains these qualities whether we can see them at a particular moment or not; the rain which cuts visibility and called a "shroud," an obvious death reference, but the month is April, a time when nature renews itself, comes alive after winter's barrenness and harshness; are all images suggesting the conscious or outward or extravert on the physical side and unconscious, inward, introvert on the figurative side.

Keats advises what to do in these circumstances: enjoy as fully as possible the beauties of this world and thereby welcome melancholy. The rose is beautiful, but as a "morning" rose it lasts a short time, i. e. , the experience is transitory. Similarly the rainbow produced by the wave is beautiful and short-lived. Is it relevant that waves keep coming? The beauty of the peonies is "wealth"; The imagery of wealth (her anger is "rich") and eating intently ("feed deep") tie the natural and the human worlds together.

The words "glut," "feed deep," and "Emprison" imply passionate involvement in experience; also the eating imagery suggests that melancholy is incorporated into, becomes part of and nourishes the individual. In Jung's psychological framework, archetypes are innate, universal prototypes for ideas and may be used to interpret observations. A group of memories and interpretations associated with an archetype is a complex.

Early in Jung's career he coined the term and described the concept of the "complex". Jung seemed to see complexes as quite autonomous parts of psychological life. It is almost as if Jung were describing separate personalities within what is considered a single individual. Jung saw an

archetype as always being the central organizing structure of a complex. This is to say, our psychological lives are patterned on common human experiences.

Interestingly, Jung saw the Ego (which Freud wrote about in German literally as the "I", one's conscious experience of oneself) as a complex. The "I" or Ego is tremendously important to Jung's clinical work. Jung's psychotic episode can be seen from a Jungian perspective as the "rest" of the psyche overwhelming the conscious psyche because the conscious psyche effectively was locking out and repressing the psyche as a whole.