

Ten Pillars of a Jungian Approach to Education

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The archetypal psychology of Carl Jung offers a valuable perspective on the characteristics that an educational system should possess.

Jung's prominence as a psychiatrist began through his association with Sigmund Freud. Their professional collaboration, starting so auspiciously in 1907 when Jung was 32 years old, ended acrimoniously a mere six years later. Although indebted to Freud's pioneering explorations into the regions beyond ego consciousness, Jung felt that he had to take that journey much farther, into deeper psychospiritual realms than Freud was prepared to go. The problem with Freud, Jung ultimately concluded, lay in his insistence that sexual instincts were the foundation of all psychic functions and dysfunctions — a notion with which Jung was never quite comfortable, even during the height of his association with Freud (Jung 1968).

In Freud's work during the Freud-Jung years, such as *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1975) and *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1965), the old master's emphasis was almost entirely sexual. In his *General Introduction to Psycho-analysis*, for instance, Freud (1970, 308) proclaimed that whenever a psychotherapist gets to the root of a patient's symptoms, the purpose of the dysfunction is always the same. "This purpose shows itself to be the gratification of sexual wishes; the symptoms serve the purpose of sexual gratification for the patient; they are a substitute for satisfactions he does not obtain in reality."

So single-minded was Freud about the sexual etiology of both healthy and pathological psychic functioning that he told Jung that the hypothesis must become a "dogma." Jung remarked in his autobiography (1963) that it was probably at that moment that he was finally convinced that he would soon have to break with Freud. This is not to say that Jung denied the psychological importance of sexuality. It is merely that he saw sexuality as only one of many fac-

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tors and impulses that power and direct psychic functioning. Jung frequently wrote that Freud had offered a powerful model of the psyche that was useful as far as it went. The problem was it just did not go far enough. This was the case, Jung argued, because reducing the many mysterious aspects of psyche to “nothing but” one animalistic drive or other, or even an assemblage of them, was a simplistic, counter-intuitive, and ethically inadequate explanation of the human being (Jung 1966, 45-46). The reduction of experience to merely biological mechanics could never yield a picture of the psyche that was whole, satisfying, and healing. Moreover, it was becoming increasingly clear to Jung in both his clinical practice and scholarly investigations that the appetite for sex as well as other “drives” were ultimately just “fragments” protruding from an even deeper layer of psychic functioning — a “primordial” layer (as Jung was fond of putting it) that formed the ancient, irreducible ground of the human psyche (1953, 90-113). But what was this ancient ground of the psyche? What were its elements and how did it work?

It was as a young resident psychiatrist at the Burghölzli Clinic in Switzerland that Jung got his first *mature* glimpses (as a child he had certain experiences and dreams that presaged his later insights) into this primordial realm of psychic functioning whose nature and dynamics he would spend the rest of his life attempting to explore and map. Jung recounts a story of a young man in his thirties whom he was treating at the Burghölzli Clinic. A schizophrenic and megalomaniac, the patient thought that he was Christ. Jung did not just dismiss the patient’s experiences as “psychotic” but saw that they remarkably resembled an obscure and ancient Mithraic creation myth (1960, 150-151). Could this weird correspondence between a schizophrenic hallucination and an ancient creation myth be due to the fact that this uneducated young man had heard or read this obscure Mithraic fable somewhere and was now producing it from the depths of his subconscious? Although unlikely, this possibility could not be ruled out. Furthermore, it was no great stretch for Jung to discern the Freudian elements in the dream. Jung suspected that there was more to it than that. He believed that these elements were examples of those “fragments” that emerged from an even deeper layer of psychic functioning, that

“primordial” layer that Jung believed to be the ultimate ground of the human psyche (1953, 90-113).

Confirmation of this hunch was provided by the fact that Jung, who was adept at various ancient languages and a competent scholar of ancient mythologies, now started to see these correspondences between individual psychic contents and mythic patterns creeping up all over the place in both the patients in his bustling clinic and the old volumes spread out over his sequestered study. In the dreams, fantasies, and hallucinations of his patients, many of whom were humble Swiss villagers, Jung began to record and analyze what would ultimately amount to thousands of instances of close correspondences to ancient images, motifs, and narratives.

This suggested that there was a very deep psychosocial well from which individuals of all sorts, and cultures and religions of all times and all places, drew in order to produce the images, themes, and stories that expressed their ways of seeing and being in the world. “This discovery,” said Jung,

means another step forward in our understanding: the recognition, that is, of two layers in the unconscious. We have to distinguish between a personal unconscious and an *impersonal* or *transpersonal unconscious*. We speak of the latter also as the *collective unconscious* because it is detached from anything personal and is common to all men, since its contents can be found everywhere, which is naturally not the case with the personal contents. (1953, 66)

The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious

Reaching the threshold of the collective unconscious and, what is more, *formulating a system* to account for it, was an important event in the history of Western psychology. It marked the beginning of a systematically “spiritual psychology” in the modern Western tradition. Jung’s *transpersonal* approach to psychology and those that have followed it grant access to those inborn primordial structures and predispositions at the deepest level of our psyches that cause us — despite personal and historical variations in language and imagery — to interpret and engage the world in much the same way from epoch to epoch and from culture to culture. But what are these structures and dispositions? Jung called them *archetypes*.

Jung's notion of the archetype has proven difficult for many people to grasp. There are probably several reasons for this. First, Jung was a psychiatrist, not an academic. His job was not to provide neat theories, tightly bundled and prettily wrapped so that undoing the package and looking inside would be a painless process for the casual observer. He was a doctor. He reported what he saw, experienced, and had done in the painful, messy, and very unclear contexts of psychotherapy. Adding to this confusion was the fact that, unlike Freud, whose practice revolved around the relatively more straightforward neuroses, Jung was interested in the more volatile and vexing psychoses. Second, Jung was a true pioneer whose life was devoted to a preliminary, empirical mapping out of territory that others had speculated about but none had explored with such persistence and thoroughness. Such a project does not permit complete, crystal-clear descriptions of the entirety of the wild land being traversed for the first time.

And finally, it was difficult for Jung to be as precise as some would have liked regarding the nature of archetypes because archetypes are inherently difficult to define. "I admit at once that [the idea of archetypes] is a controversial idea and more than a little perplexing," Jung confessed. "But I have always wondered what sort of ideas my critics would have used to characterize the empirical material in question" (1953, 77, n. 15). The psychospiritual wellsprings from which our thoughts, feelings, dreams and religions emerge are as mysterious as human life itself and in that sense defy description. Thus, when we come into contact with an archetype we have an experience of the divine within us, the *numinous*, as Jung called it, drawing on the Greek word for spirit, *numen*.

In light of so much confusion about archetypes, it is perhaps useful to say what an archetype is *not*. It is not — as some of Jung's less perceptive readers have tried to claim — an inherited image or belief system genetically passed down across many generations. True, some of Jung's *earliest* statements about archetypes did suggest that they could be inherited images, but he soon abandoned this Lamarckian notion. In other words, just because one's ancestors have worshiped Osiris, Dionysius, or Christ, for instance, does not mean that one's children, grandchildren, or great grandchildren will be born with a lit-

eral image of that particular god genetically embedded in their minds. What we *are* all born with, said Jung, is the *innate predisposition* to worship a dying and resurrected god. That disposition constitutes an *archetype* — in this case, *the archetype of the savior*. Because an archetype is a human universal, one would expect to find it manifested broadly throughout history. And in this, one would not be disappointed. In ancient Egypt, for instance, the archetype of the savior was embodied in the form of the god Osiris, in Greece by Dionysus, and in Roman-occupied Palestine around 30 C.E. by an itinerant preacher named Jesus. But in all of these cases, the archetypal energy is more or less the same. What is variable, said Jung, are the *archetypal images* that will be used to flesh out the archetype, for they will depend on historical, cultural, and personal factors. The infrastructure of psyche, then, can be pictured as shifting patterns of primary urges, predispositions, and needs; that is, as a shifting mosaic of archetypes. In their primal manifestation, these innate and universal psychic forces can be pictured as *nodes of energy*. We all have our psychic being in and because of our archetypes, which, because they are shared and "objective," reside in and emanate from what Jung considered to be an ontologically real *collective unconscious*.

There are probably innumerable archetypes, manifesting themselves in such forms as the trickster, the lover, the divine child, the shadow, the magical animal, the nurturing mother, the witch, the law-giving father, the devil, initiation, holy matrimony, mandalas, trinities and quaternities, judgment, heaven, hell, atonement, and a great many others. The point to note for our purposes is just this: simply by virtue of the fact that we are human, we are born "hard-wired" with a wide range of dispositions to understand and act upon our world in certain typical ways. "This disposition," said Jung, "I [call] the *archetype*" (1967b, 102).

The Personal Dimension

Jung never lost sight of the *personal* nature of the psyche — its strictly biographical dimension. For instance, the reader who has ever heard the terms *persona* or *shadow* used in psychological discourse has already encountered Jungian ego-psychology concepts. Some neo-Freudian ego-psychologists even use a va-

riety of Jungian terms without being fully aware that they originated with Jung (Frey-Rohn 1974).

The *persona* is, to borrow the words of the poet T. S. Eliot (1971, 4), the face you “prepare to meet the faces that you meet.” The *persona* is the ego-invented and ego-protecting facade that we don for others to see: to assure them, and ourselves, that we are “one of the group,” that we “know the rules” and are willing and able to play by them, and, in general, that we are “doing well” (Goffman 1999). Having *personas* is not in itself a bad thing. It is, in fact, a very necessary thing since we must all negotiate the quotidian world and cooperate with others in many different ways in the course of a day. The *persona* “mediates between the ego and the outer world” (Samuels 1997, 215). Problems regarding the *persona* arise when it no longer functions as the ego’s servant but becomes its master. For the ego, being “a complex of ideas which constitutes the center of my field of consciousness and appears to possess a high degree of continuity and identity,” is greater than the *persona* (Jung 1971, 425). Thus, when an individual becomes so preoccupied with how he appears to others that this concern comes to dominate his conscious awareness, he is *persona possessed*.

The *shadow* is also involved with the psychology of the ego. Jung noted that his idea of the shadow was roughly equivalent to Freud’s idea of the personal unconscious (1967b, 183, n. 14). As in Freud’s theory, Jung’s shadow contains the repressed contents that we do not want to admit to ourselves — the behavior we consider bad or evil. But Jung’s concept of the shadow also contains some elements that Freud’s model does not. Sometimes we need to hide our talents, virtues, and potentials which, if we were open about them, we feel we would put ourselves in emotional or social peril. Also residing in the shadow are certain “insufficiently developed functions.” In the Jungian view, it is highly important that we face and integrate our shadow, or at least various aspects of it, into our conscious awareness and personality. So key is this notion of the shadow and its acceptance that it was “the *leitmotiv* of Jung’s later works” (Frey-Rohn 1974, 3).

One reason to confront the shadow is that some of the dispositions and potentials that one has repressed can, if consciously acknowledged and care-

fully nurtured, emerge from the shadow and help one become a more complete and powerful person, more *whole*. To grow into one’s full stature as a social, intellectual and moral being by realizing as much of one’s potential as possible is the great moral imperative that life lays upon us all. A truly productive life depends on overcoming the fear of irrational family censure or small-minded social disapproval in order to become the best person that one can be. This will sometimes mean inviting those elements out of the shadow that one once banished — and perhaps *had to banish* in order to survive in a family or culture — and (re)integrating them into oneself in a way that permits a more effective, genuine, compassionate, and satisfying existence. This is what Jung means by becoming *whole*. In the imperfect realm of existence in which we as fallible mortals live, the merciless drive for perfection is unrealistic and, if not put in a proper perspective, neurotic. In the tireless push to be perfect — perfectly strong, perfectly beautiful, perfectly virtuous, having the perfect house, perfect job, and perfect children — we make inhuman demands upon ourselves and those around us. Losing our sense of humor as well as our sense of humanity, we inevitably fall into sundry subtle traps and wind up doing ourselves and those around us great harm.

There is yet another reason that we must confront our own shadows, and it is easily stated using another term from Jungian psychology that has become widely known: *projection*. It is through projection that we condemn most passionately in others what we refuse to see in ourselves. This is not to say that whenever we see something that we consider to be disagreeable in another person or situation we are simply projecting our own shadows onto him or her. But it is to say that until we own up to our shadow, we will never know if this is the case or not. What is more, even if we do correctly perceive weakness or even immorality in another, our response to it will be tempered by an awareness of our own fallibility if we have confronted our own shadows. This will in turn engender a greater ability to forgive and help other people, and not sanctimoniously condemn them. Confronting one’s shadow is thus vital to psychological and moral health. As such, the encounter with the shadow is more than just an abstract admission that one has a negative side. “The growing aware-

ness of the inferior part of the personality," Jung (1960, 208) wrote, "should not be twisted into an intellectual activity, for it has far more the meaning of a suffering and a passion that implicate the whole man." It requires moral courage to seek "ruthless self-knowledge" (1959b, 166).

Implications for Education: The Ten Pillars

The Teacher–Student Relationship is Archetypal

Perhaps the first thing to note about Jung's view of education is that he felt that *educational processes are themselves archetypal*. By this he did not *only* mean that the teacher could help the student discover archetypal truths in the subject matter but also that "*the teacher*" and "*the student*" are themselves archetypal figures. Their relationship is an archetypal event — just as "bride," "groom," and "marriage" are an archetypal situation; or just as "doctor," "patient," and "healing"; or "parent," "child," and "family" are. The interaction between teacher and student is woven so deeply into the fabric of what it means to be a human being that it is impossible to conceive of the human situation without it. Throughout our lives, we are involved in educational acts — as teachers, students, and often both. No human culture has ever been founded or perpetuated without education about everything from how the universe came into being to how to prepare a meal. Something so fundamental to creating and sustaining individuals and cultures is necessarily archetypal.

The powerful archetypal significance of education is evidenced in the centrality of the archetypes of the Wise Old Man and Wise Old Woman, which are at the very top of Jung's list of the most historically prominent archetypes (1967b, 390-391). The Wise Old Man and Woman show up in many myths, religions and dreams, often in connection with a young hero or heroine who is engaged in a dangerous journey in order to accomplish a great but difficult task. At the beginning of the journey, the hero crosses a threshold into a perilous forest, desert, or jungle. This symbolizes the hero's acceptance of the challenge to leave childish things behind and to master those difficulties that will lead to both personal and transpersonal growth (Campbell 1949). Soon after crossing the border into the land of dangerous adventure, the hero

meets the Wise Old Man or Woman. These wise ones successfully completed their own archetypal quests many years ago when they were young and now often possess powerful amulets and knowledge about potions. Guiding the young travelers, these Wise Ones are, above all else, teachers. Their amulets and potions symbolize the fact that they are able to direct the seeker because they have had their own visions which they can now communicate to the young novice so that he may one day have his own experience of the transcendent. They often speak in riddles to spur their young students on to intellectual and moral growth. So closely is the Wise Old Man related to teaching, in fact, that Jung felt him to be the archetype that best "personifies *meaning*" (1963, 233).

The teacher who understands the student-teacher archetype, and who is most in touch with the archetypal nature of not only his profession but his very psyche, is also bound to be an influential teacher.

Whoever speaks in primordial images speaks with a thousand voices; he enralls and overpowers, while at the same time he lifts the idea he is seeking to express out of the occasional and transitory into the realm of the ever-enduring. He transmutes our personal destiny into the destiny of mankind, and evokes in us all those beneficent forces that ever and anon have enabled humanity to find a refuge from every peril and to outlive the longest night. (Jung 1966, 82)

Education Should Not be Reduced to Technical Rationality

Considering Jung's view of education as being an inherently archetypal and therefore potentially sacred act, it will probably not surprise the reader to learn that he objected to any approach to teaching and learning that was essentially technical in its means and goals. A physician and a pragmatist, Jung undoubtedly understood that education has legitimate technical goals. However, these must be secondary to the primary goal of deepening the student psychologically, politically, and morally. "It cannot be the aim of education," Jung declared in terms reminiscent of the American Progressives of the first half of the 20th century,

to turn out rationalists, materialists, specialists, technicians and others of the kind who, unconscious of their origins, are precipitated abruptly into the present and contribute to the disorientation and fragmentation of society" (quoted in Frey-Rohn 1974, 182).

An educational system that exists simply to service the needs of a consumer society and its military-industrial machinery is not only inimical to the delicate archetypal dynamics of the student-teacher relationship but, in the final analysis, also socially *destabilizing*, despite its grand social-efficiency claims. Why is this?

It is because such forms of education do not address the whole child in all of his physical, emotional, political, cultural, and ethical complexity. The result is psychic "disorientation and fragmentation" in children, which will lead with tragic inevitability to the same result in a society whose citizens and leaders those children will one day become. It is this type of "social efficiency" curriculum (Kliebard 1995) that was championed in such documents as the *A Nation at Risk* report (1983), which reflected the essential nature of many federal educational "reform" agendas in the last 100 years (Tyack 1974). As the authors of that document declared, "the basic purposes of schooling" must relate to the overarching goal of reestablishing America's "once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science and technological innovation." Only these educational goals are considered legitimate. All others are seen as contributing to America's military-industrial decline. The aim of education by this view is to do exactly what Jung warned against: "to turn out rationalists, materialists, specialists, technicians." Corporate education "blots out" the individual, and it does so across the span of the person's formal education: it "begins in school [and] continues at the university" (1953, 153). This is immoral for several reasons: it creates the "mass man" of technocratic society and thus robs the individual of his uniqueness; it accomplishes this totalitarian goal by doing violence to the deeper personal needs of teachers, students, and administrators; and it grossly impinges upon the delicacy and sanctity of the archetypal relationship between teacher and student, wreaking psychological, social and moral havoc (1967c, 47-48; 1953, 13-14).

Education Should Not be Mere "Intellectualism"

A great scholar, Jung understood the life of the mind. Nevertheless, he was adamant about the danger of relying overmuch upon reason and the intellect. Certainly, rationality — and the classical forms of education meant to encourage it — are important. However, for Jung it was an article of faith that the mystery of how and why the psyche and, indeed, the entire universe operate as they do far exceeds mere reason and materialistic explanations. Like Kant, whom he studied as a very young man and deeply admired throughout his life, Jung believed that although reason provides an indispensable lens through which we see and interpret ourselves and the universe, it is, in the final analysis, simply *one* lens among many. It may *portray* a thing in terms that we can understand, but we must not fall into the trap of believing that those terms necessarily describe the ultimate *reality* of the "thing-in-itself." Jung often mentioned the Kantian distinction between the *esse in intellectu* (that is, the thing as it appears to our reason) and the *esse in re* (the thing as it *really* is). Between the two, said Jung, is a yawning chasm that our poor syllogisms can never bridge.

What we *can* know, Jung believed, is the *esse in anima*, or the thing as we *holistically experience it in our total psyche*, our soul (1971, 45). In saying this, Jung was not claiming — as he is often misinterpreted as doing — that there is no ultimate reality beyond our ideas. Such nihilism was disagreeable to Jung, leading to anarchy, the very thing he most dreaded. It is simply that we must always have the humility and commonsense to recognize that reality is never obliged to conform to our models of it, even our most impressively academic and dazzlingly logical ones. The cosmos is greater than any formal propositions we can make about it. What this means for both psychology and education is that any approach to human knowing "that satisfies the intellect alone can never be practical, for the totality of the psyche can never be grasped by the intellect alone" (Jung 1953, 76). Developing the intellect is an important educational goal, of course. But *mere intellectualism*, taken to extremes, claimed Jung, leads to ontological error, spiritual pride, and psychosocial imbalance. Extreme intellectualism is "in point of fact ... nothing more than the sum total of all [a person's] prejudices and myopic

views" (1959a, 13). For Jung, the cognitive-rationalist curriculum is an important piece of the holistic pedagogical jigsaw, but it is far from the only one.

Teachers and Students Can Explore Archetypal Dimensions of Subject Matter

In a curriculum sensitive to Jungian perspectives, there should be an ongoing endeavor to discover in any subject in the curriculum its archetypal roots and fruits. This project is not only educationally possible but necessary because "the greatest and best thoughts of man shape themselves upon ... primordial images as upon a blueprint" (Jung 1953, 69). In order to get to the heart of an idea, theory, model, or piece of art, therefore, it is necessary to penetrate its archetypal infrastructure. This is not to say that the archetypal approach will always be the primary educational goal. However, even when the archetypal perspective is not the core of a curriculum, it may still enliven the analysis of virtually any subject.

Rudolf Steiner's Waldorf Schools admirably accomplish this aim from kindergarten through 12th grade. Throughout a Waldorf education, the teacher organizes much of the curriculum around archetypal images that have been drawn from an array of religious, cultural, and artistic traditions and periods (Trostli 1988). Even basic math is studied in archetypal terms in early Waldorf education. When the teacher and student view their subject in this light — looking for the archetypal rhizome beneath the ever-shifting scenery of particular events and situation, as Jung once put it (1963) — they are engaged in an archetypal study of history. Educators from many other fields have used archetypal terms and paradigms to frame their disciplines — from the archetypal approach to physics by the Nobel-Prize-winning scientist Wolfgang Pauli, to religious studies by Union Theological Seminary's Ann Ulanov, to sociology and cultural studies by Michael Adams and Richard Gray. The classroom teacher may draw upon these studies to shape an innovatively archetypal curriculum or supplement a traditional one.

The Symbolic Domain and Intuitive Function are Educationally Crucial

Jung once said that concepts are ultimately stiff and empty things, like coins used to buy food, but symbols are the bread of life itself. Because Jung al-

ways stood in awe of the finally inscrutable mystery of things, he insisted that symbols can bring us much closer than theoretical speculation to those timeless truths which are able to satisfy our hearts. A Jungian theory of education emphasizes helping the student engage with his world in richly symbolic terms. A symbol stimulates our ability to intuit a reality that transcends mere ratiocination. It points beyond itself. In doing this, it accomplishes more than a sign, which is merely an arbitrary token that mechanically *stands for* something else in a one-to-one correspondence. The sign \int in the calculus means one thing *and one thing only* — namely that I must perform the mathematical operation of integration. However, the declaration in T. S. Eliot's poem *The Wasteland* that there is "fear in a handful of dust" generates many strands of interweaving and mutually enriching interpretations (Jung 1971, 38). The clenched hand holding the dust might suggest terror, grasping, and the denial of death. The fist, unclenching, then evokes feelings of resignation, loss of potency, and the release of dust to dust, ashes to ashes. The wind that bears the dust away is an emblem of the indifferent motions of an empty universe, but at the same time it conjures up images of the breath and spirit of God. Stark terror and wise acceptance, frank futility and divine love — all of this (and a great deal more) is included in the unsettling image of fear in a handful of dust. It leads us to an *experience* of the struggle of life against death — and the hope for something beyond it. In brief, the symbol whisks us away into an uncharted mystery while a sign ploddingly takes us from point A to B.

Thus, unlike the typical politically motivated cries for educational reform through the imposition of standardized testing, which always cast art and literature to the edges, a Jungian curriculum stresses them. "The great secret of art ... and the creative process" Jung (1066, 82) observed,

consists in the unconscious activation of an archetypal image, and in elaborating and shaping this image into the finished work. By giving it shape, the artist translates it into the language of the present, and so makes it possible for us to find the way back to the deepest springs of life....

Jung laid the groundwork for modern typological psychology by positing that there were four basic personality types: thinking, feeling, intuition, and sensation (1971). In education driven by the corporate project of creating and dominating markets, the archetypally feminine and spiritual function of intuition receives precious little attention; however, in a Jungian education intuition is crucial because it is only in the medium of intuition that symbols can live. Symbols and intuition are obviously related because “the symbol is the primitive exponent of the unconscious, but at the same time an idea that corresponds to the highest intuition of the conscious mind” (Jung 1978, 30). Naturally, it is impossible to quantify intuition. It is in many respects the very antithesis of quantification. Educationists and politicians who worship the standardized test will therefore always look upon intuition with great suspicion because it can be neither controlled nor predicted — those two great aims of “scientism” and business. Thus, it is timely to heed Jung’s (1971, 63) reminder that

not the artist alone, but every creative individual whatsoever owes all that is greatest in his life to fantasy. The dynamic principle of fantasy is *play*, a characteristic also of the child, and as such it appears inconsistent with the principle of serious work. But without this playing with fantasy no creative work has ever come to birth. The debt we owe to the play of imagination is incalculable.

Failure Can be Constructive

Although a Jungian view of education emphasizes nurturing the student, this does not mean that she should live in a risk-free environment. One gets the feeling in reading some of the literature on teaching-as-care that it has taken the idea of nurturance too far, not allowing the student to learn how to overcome those intellectual and ethical obstacles that are necessary for growth. However, it is one of the most crucial axioms of Jungian psychology that all energy “can proceed only from the tension of opposites” (1953, 29). Where there is no opposition but merely a satiated stasis, there is not only no *need* to grow but no *way* to grow. Besides, where there is no possibility of failure, success is meaningless. Jung said that *katabasis*, a

Greek term for the descent to the underworld, is requisite for psychospiritual maturation (1966, 140).

The student who is perpetually shielded against the developmentally necessary reality of occasional failure must ultimately succumb to a kind of psychic entropy. Or, to put it in archetypal terms, the student in a classroom whose teacher has over-identified with the archetype of the Great Mother (and this may be a male teacher as well as a female one) will ultimately find himself rocked into a moral and intellectual stupor in that teacher’s excessively protective embrace. Every archetype has both a bright and dark side. The shadow of the Great Mother is the Devouring Mother, the caregiver who will not let her children go but instead spins such a web of care around them that she paralyzes them.

Not every failure in a classroom is healthy, of course. The teacher must handle the student’s failure in a constructive, nonpunitive manner, patiently helping the student see how she fell short and what together they can do to help her reach her full potential in a given area, however great or limited that potential may turn out to be. This kind of wisely handled failure leading to eventual success differs greatly from the student’s impersonal and humiliating experience of failure on standardized tests. As in parenting, the best teaching strategies are neither *authoritarian* (as in standardized testing) nor *permissive* (as in an overly nurturing style of teaching). They are *authoritative*, blending judgment (the archetypally paternal) and care (the archetypally maternal) (Brophy 1994).

Education has a Legitimate Therapeutic Function

Since the beginning of modern developmental psychology with G. Stanley Hall’s (1904) text, *Adolescence*, educationists have tried to apply the findings of psychological research and practice. The very idea of a “developmentally appropriate curriculum” is already an attempt to shape pedagogy around children’s evolving psychic issues and interests. The junior high school, for instance, was established in order to help students make the psychologically difficult transition from early childhood to adolescence and, as such, is inherently a “therapeutic” institution (Tyack 1974). The highly significant document produced by the NEA in 1918, *Cardinal Principles of Sec-*

ondary Education, defined the public high school as a tool for psychosocially molding children during adolescence. August Aichhorn (1965) a prominent Freudian psychiatrist of adolescence, argued that every teacher should know at least the fundamentals of psychoanalysis so that she could apply them in the classroom. Margaret Naumburg, the founder of the Walden School movement, asked her teachers to undergo psychoanalysis (just as Freud and Jung required of analysts in training) so that the teachers could recognize and appropriately respond to their students' psychosexual dilemmas (Cremin 1964). And, of course, counseling and special education programs in colleges of education prepare people to play various therapeutic roles in the schools. The current popularity of self-esteem-enhancing curricula and the literature on teaching-as-care show that many teachers continue to see their vocation in a therapeutic light. Indeed, the "teacher-as-therapist" is an image that some teachers think of when asked to reflect on the nature of their work with children (Mayes 2001). Like a good therapist, then, the teacher must have a personalized sense of what makes each student tick if she is to be most effective at her work. Jung claimed that "for the doctor this means the individual study of every case; for the teacher, the individual study of every student" (1954, 93). Jung therefore felt that "it is in fact highly desirable that the educator, if he wishes to really understand the mentality of his pupils, should pay attention to the findings of analytical psychology" (1954, 68). However, Jung added the caveat that "the deepened psychological knowledge of the teacher should not, as unfortunately sometimes happens, be unloaded directly on the child; rather it should help the teacher to adopt an understanding attitude toward the child's psychic life" (1954, 51). In short, although teaching has a therapeutic aspect, the teacher should always remember that she is not a therapist (1954, 74).

Reflectivity is Key to Teacher Development

Because Jung placed great faith in and responsibilities on the teacher, he was a staunch advocate of the ongoing education of the teacher. Yet, unlike many of the positivist educationists of his day, Jung put very little stock in "training" prospective and practicing teachers to follow pre-packaged "methods." For "in

reality, everything depends on the man and little or nothing on the method" (Jung 1978, 9). The teacher's moral character and psychological insight are what will really win or lose the day for him with his students. The therapist and the educator are similar in that "psychotherapy has taught us that in the final reckoning it is not knowledge, not technical skill, that has a curative effect, but the personality of the doctor. And it is the same with education: It presupposes self-education" (1954, 140). For Jung, this "self-education" consisted in what today is called "teacher reflectivity" (Bullough 1991; Mayes 1999). In this process, the teacher examines and critiques himself and his practice in psychological and political terms to see if he is being as sensitive and fair with all of his students as he can be, or if he has unresolved issues or prejudices that are standing in the way. "The teacher should watch his own psychic condition, so that he can spot the source of trouble when anything goes wrong with the children entrusted to his care" (1954, 120).

Education Should be Both Culturally Conservative and Progressive

When it comes to the sociocultural aspects of education, Jung's vision is a mix of cultural conservatism and radicalism. On the conservative side, Jung advocated a traditional humanities curriculum as part of the student's schooling in the higher grades. He believed students should "have a regard for history in the widest sense of the word" (1954, 144). And true to his conservative nature, Jung warned that "anything new should always be questioned and tested with caution, for it may very easily turn out to be only a new disease" (1954, 145). Besides, it is only by honoring the tried-and-true standards that have developed over time that we can rein in our instincts, many of which are, as Jung the psychiatrist well knew, psychologically and morally injurious to self and other (1969, 80). Those who see in Jung's fascination with archetypes a call for a return to primitivism grossly misinterpret him. Jung saw education as one of humanity's best hopes to control our animal nature and promote social and spiritual evolution. He detested "the present tendency to destroy all tradition or render it unconscious," for this must "interrupt the normal process of development for several hundred years and

substitute and interlude of barbarism" (Jung 1959b, 181). Besides, our personal identities are so interwoven with our individual and collective histories that we cannot know *ourselves* if we do not know *them*. We can know ourselves deeply and resist attempts at political domination only by a solid appreciation of our past. This is why "loss of roots and lack of tradition neurotize the masses and prepare them for collective hysteria" (Jung 1959b, 181).

But in contrast to many contemporary advocates of a culturally conservative curriculum, however, Jung did not do so out of a sense of cultural superiority or xenophobia. As we have seen, Jung was a great student of culture — from the nearest to the most distant in space and time. He traveled from the jungles of Africa to the deserts of New Mexico to gain first-hand experience of indigenous peoples, about whom he wrote with great lucidity, genuine admiration, and unfeigned love. Hence, there is a lifetime of personal and intellectual experience in Jung's pithy observation that "the white race is not a species of *homo sapiens* specially favored by God" (1967c, 82). It is not only white Europeans who need to know about their history. All people must know about the great events, ideas, and hopes of their own cultures, for therein lie those symbols that can bring out the best in them individually and socially.

Jung was very clear that the so-called "civilized" cultures are not superior to the so-called "primitive" ones in this respect and are in some respects inferior. Indeed, as Jung saw the Westerner's faith in foundational cultural narratives eroding, he warned that "the old myth needs to be clothed anew in every renewed age if it is not to lose its therapeutic effect" (1959b, 181). Sometimes, incorporating elements from "less advanced" cultural traditions is just what is needed to provide that new cultural "clothing." Decades before the modern multicultural movement, Jung argued for the value of cultural diversity, insisting that education must be culturally critical as well as culturally preserving.

Furthermore, Jung believed that the idea of the shadow and projection could help teachers and students examine the negative side of their own national culture. For just as individuals have unconscious and unwelcome sides that they tend to project onto others, so do societies. A culture's shadow can

be discerned in who it perceives its enemies to be, for it is onto its enemies that a culture projects what it most fears in itself. A culture's collective shadow is the flip-side of its conscious values (Odajnyk 1976). Jung (1953, 26) wrote:

If people can be educated to see the shadow side of their nature clearly, it may be hoped that they will also learn to understand and love their fellow men better. A little less hypocrisy and a little more self-knowledge can only have good results in respect for our neighbor; for we are all too prone to transfer to our fellows the injustices and violence we inflict upon our own natures.

Not only nations but also families, communities, political parties and ethnic groups have collective shadows that are the underside of their conscious, normative values. Left unexamined and unintegrated, these shadows get projected onto "opposing" families, communities, political parties, and races. Education, particularly the social studies, can help students explore cultural projection by asking such questions as the following: In a bellicose policy toward another community or state, what part of the motivation for that policy might stem from cultural projection? Conversely, in considering critiques of our own society, which of them are simply projections onto "the ugly American" and which contain truths which we must heed? When education helps the individual cast light on the shadow in himself and his culture, then, guarded against the seductive prejudices of *groupthink*, he can become an agent in making his culture more ethical.

In brief, "individuation ... has a political aspect to it" (Samuels 2001, 23). By taking the best of the conservative and liberal views of culture, teachers can help students grow into adults who, attaining the maximum degree of integration in themselves, can promote integration in their families, communities, and cultures.

Education Can and Should Have a Spiritual Dimension

Jung's view of the interaction of spirituality and culture agrees with Paul Tillich's (1956, 103) famous pronouncement that "religion is the soul of culture and culture the form of religion." Every culture has

“a highly developed system of secret teaching, a body of lore concerning the things that lie beyond man’s earthly existence, and of wise rules of conduct” (Jung 1966, 96). It is from the archetypally fertile ground of these *fundamental narratives*, this “body of lore,” that a society’s civic and legal narratives and grow over the centuries (Bruner 1996). Berger (1967, 52) has highlighted how most cultures are grounded in their (sometimes unspoken) spiritual commitments, especially regarding mortality and the promise of an afterlife, for “every human society is, in the last resort, men banded together in the face of death. The power of religion depends, in the last resort, upon the credibility of the banners it puts in the hands of men as they stand before death, or more accurately, as they walk, inevitably, toward it.”

Despite the fashionable but incorrect academic truism that (post)modern life is “profane” or “desacralized,” most historians and sociologists of religion note that spirituality, in both its institutional and strictly personal forms, is as important now to most people as it ever was — and perhaps even more so (Marty 1987; Nord 1995). This inextinguishable personal and cultural need to connect with the transcendent and to live in its light is a universal urge for individuals and peoples. As long as we must personally and collectively face what T. S. Eliot (1971, 6) called “the overwhelming questions” of our morality and mortality, spiritual commitment is bound to be a significant issue for most people. Any approach to education that ignores this ethical and cultural imperative to live in the light of transpersonal truth is inadequate. This is why, for Jung, a theory of either therapy or education that does not take spirituality into account must ultimately fail. For not only are archetypes inherently spiritual but *spirituality is itself an archetype*, a basic human need and capacity. In both the consulting room and classroom, spirituality must be honored and explored as the pivotal emotional, social, and intellectual force that it is. Furthermore, *morality is an archetype*, not just a social invention or sexual displacement as Freud held. Students naturally want to explore moral issues in their studies; they will feel bored and short-changed if they cannot. Ethical questions and systems are

a function of the human soul, as old as humanity itself. Morality is not imposed from outside;

we have it in ourselves from the start — not the law, but our moral nature without which the collective life of human society would be impossible. That is why morality is found at all levels of society. It is the instinctive regulator of action.... (Jung 1953, 27)

Tillich (1959) said that in the last analysis everyone has ethical and spiritual commitments because everyone has “ultimate concerns.” A Jungian approach allows us to envision a pedagogy which helps students explore those ultimate concerns in a way that is spiritually sensitive without being theologically dogmatic or denominationally partisan.

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Spring Equinox 2005 (The New War Dead)

Gerald McCarthy

A flock of starlings
scuttle on the rooftop
splashing in pools of rainwater.

The first leaves in the branches
of the red maple tree.

Look, my friend says
there's a kind of dark
all around us,
you have to get used to it, s'all.

Bricker's neighbor shot himself in his garage,
the summer I turned eleven.
He drove an old gray Plymouth,
a car with a single headlight like a beak.

Birdman of Church Street, we called him.
The car was pulled in when the shot went off.
A pistol, Tommy said, Smith & Wesson 38.
Once in winter I cut the yards,
saw him bent over his workbench —
the trouble light overhead,
cigarette smoke.
He saw my shadow and looked up.

Now March rain keeps falling
and the news slips out.
The dead come back.
A line of graying birds
are huddled together in the rain.

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