

Seven Questions for Personal Reflection on the Shadow

(Nota Bene: As the Shadow is generally experienced unconsciously, making choices for us, possessing us, or projecting onto others, it is very difficult to apprehend aspects of the personal Shadow. Recall always, Jung's definition of the Shadow as, "that which I do not wish to be."

1. What do you consider your virtues? Can you imagine where those virtues become contrary to your intention? Can you imagine their opposite in your unconscious? Where do those opposites turn up in your outer life?
2. Examine the key patterns of your relationships. Where does the Shadow manifest itself, either in patterns of avoidance or in repetitions which bring predictable negative consequences?
3. If you are in a close relationship, what annoys you about your partner? Forget your rationalizations for awhile; that person was chosen for a good reason—he or she embodies aspects of your Shadow.
4. Where do you repeatedly undermine yourself, shoot yourself in the foot, cause yourself familiar griefs? Where do you flee from your best, riskiest self?
5. Where are you stuck in your life, blocked in your development? What fear(s) blocks your growth?
6. Where do Mom and Dad still govern your life, either through repetition, overcompensation, or your special treatment plan?
7. Where do you refuse to grow up, wait for clarity of vision, hope for solutions to your life, expect rescue from someone, somewhere, or wait for someone to make sense of it all for you?

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