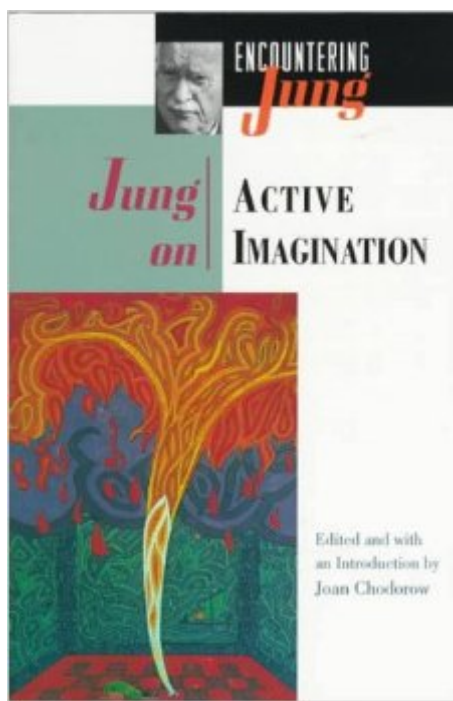


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Jung On Active Imagination



Synopsis

All the creative art psychotherapies (art, dance, music, drama, poetry) can trace their roots to C. G. Jung's early work on active imagination. Joan Chodorow here offers a collection of Jung's writings on active imagination, gathered together for the first time. Jung developed this concept between the years 1913 and 1916, following his break with Freud. During this time, he was disoriented and experienced intense inner turmoil --he suffered from lethargy and fears, and his moods threatened to overwhelm him. Jung searched for a method to heal himself from within, and finally decided to engage with the impulses and images of his unconscious. It was through the rediscovery of the symbolic play of his childhood that Jung was able to reconnect with his creative spirit. In a 1925 seminar and again in his memoirs, he tells the remarkable story of his experiments during this time that led to his self-healing. Jung learned to develop an ongoing relationship with his lively creative spirit through the power of imagination and fantasies. He termed this therapeutic method "active imagination." This method is based on the natural healing function of the imagination, and its many expressions. Chodorow clearly presents the texts, and sets them in the proper context. She also interweaves her discussion of Jung's writings and ideas with contributions from Jungian authors and artists.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jung on Active Imagination is a compilation of C. G. Jung's writings on the particular discipline called "active imagination." This book is the definitive individual work on the subject. Jung

developed the technique during the years immediately following his split with Freud. It is not, as some suggest, a meditative technique but a method of actively engaging the imagination in pursuit of contents generally hidden within the unconscious. The book's editor, Jungian analyst Joan Chodorow PhD, has done a marvelous job of assembling all the relevant material from Jung's collected works. Chodorow also provides a marvelous, twenty-page introduction for those not familiar with active imagination. This then is a book that will be of value to both the Jungian professional and the interested layman, such as myself. Active Imagination in and of itself is a discipline wherein the practitioner, after securing a secluded place of relative isolation, clears away a space within the psyche and then actively watches for images and listens for voices that originate spontaneously. The practitioner then focuses on the images and/or voices and attempts to engage these psychic entities in dialogue. The intention is to encounter psychic entities that come from within the practitioner's subconscious. Jung recognized two different aspects of the unconscious. The first, he termed the shadow, which has its origin in the repressed, culturally unacceptable, portion of the ego. The second, Jung termed the collective unconscious, which contains the inherited archetypes of human existence that ultimately create civilization. When the practitioner encounters entities from either aspect of the unconscious, he/she allows the entity to retain its autonomy as much as possible.

I am a bit disappointed in the book. Not in its content or quality, but only because I already have these essays in other books that I have by C.G. Jung. That is the only reason why I give it three stars. I wish there would have been a table of contents that could be reviewed prior to purchasing the book, but at this time, there isn't. Someone contacted me recently about the contents of the book so here are the essays as they appear in "Jung, On Active Imagination." Confrontation with the unconscious. From: Memories, Dreams, Reflections. Chapter 6, pages 170-199. The Transcendent Function. From: The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche. Collected Works, Volume 8, paragraphs 131-193. The technique of differentiation between the ego and figures of the unconscious. From: The relations between the ego and the unconscious, in Two Essays on Analytical Psychology. Collected Works, Volume 7, paragraphs 341-373. Commentary on The Secret of the Golden Flower. Excerpts from: Alchemical Studies. Collected Works, Volume 13, paragraphs 17-45. The aims of psychotherapy. From: The practice of psychotherapy. Collected Works, Volume 16, paragraphs 66-113. A study in the process of individuation. Excerpts from: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. Collected Works, Volume 9.1, paragraphs 525-626. The Tavistock Lectures. Excerpts from: The Symbolic Life. Collected Works, Volume 18, paragraph 4

and paragraphs 390-415. The psychological aspects of the Kore. Excerpts from: The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious. Collected Works, Volume 9.1, paragraphs 319-334.

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