

10. BEFRIENDING THE SHADOW

We meet ourselves in a thousand disguises along the path.

—Jung

The Shadow is the archetype of the unconscious that represents the feared, denied, unaddressed, forbidden, and excluded parts of ourselves. Joseph Campbell calls the Shadow “the inconvenient or resisted psychic powers that we have not dared to integrate.” We project these powers (characteristics) onto others of our same sex and react strongly to them.

The negative Shadow is composed of our own unacceptable and disowned defects that we strongly condemn in others. What we are unconscious of in ourselves, we become emphatically conscious of in others.

The positive Shadow is composed of the good qualities hidden in us that we strongly admire or envy in others. We consciously respect in them what we inwardly disavow in ourselves. “In every work of genius, we can recognize our own rejected thoughts. They come back to us with a certain alienated majesty” (Emerson).

I and It

The Shadow turns some of our “I” (what is really ourselves) into “It” (which seems to exist only in others). Befriending the Shadow means restoring our “I” to its wholeness by taking back—re-collecting—all our projected, banished parts. “Where It was, there I shall be” (Freud).

What we exclude and disown becomes larger than life. It turns on us and scares us. We are then hurt by an unlive part

of our very selves. To re-collect or integrate our projections is to acknowledge them and let them back in. Then we contain all the parts of ourselves. This is the meaning of psychological healing: acknowledging what we have denied and restoring the full complement of our own powers.

We drop defenses long enough to admit and allow that the negative “out there” is somehow “in here.” Then we automatically discover its inner core of positive value and personal enrichment. To drop defenses is to depart from the neurotic attachment of ego. It is to reach a coherently healthy ego.

Beauty accepted the Beast while he was still ugly and so found the Prince, beautiful like her, i.e., her partner, her missing part, her other half. She enlisted the very energy that she had once feared and disenfranchised. Her foe then became her ally, no longer larger than life but life-size. She discovered an identity with him. This is the spiritual self, the same in all of us, released by unconditional love.

Integrating the Positive Shadow

To integrate the positive Shadow is to acknowledge our own untapped potential behind the awe we have of others. We begin to acknowledge and to release from within ourselves the very talents and qualities we admired in others. At first this means “acting as if” but soon we act with ease and even more of our hidden powers become accessible to us. We expend effort and then grace takes over.

Integrating the Negative Shadow

To integrate the negative Shadow, we admit—without at first seeing the justification—that we have the very characteristic we so disparage in someone else. We drop blame and discover a valuable kernel. We then find in ourselves this positive, but still Unlived, counterpart of the negative quality we see in another. Hidden in everything negative is something alive and beautiful that wants to belong to us (as the Prince within the Beast wanted to belong

to Beauty). *Negative only means not yet redeemed by conscious integration.*

What follows is a list of the counterparts of the negative Shadow. As you acknowledge anything you strongly dislike in others (left column), you are challenged to adopt its equivalent positive lively quality for yourself (right column).

PROJECTED	UNOWNED
<i>If you are strongly upset by others':</i>	<i>Then you have but may not be using your own:</i>
Addictiveness	Steadfastness
Anxiety	Excitement
Approval seeking	Openness to appreciation
Arrogance	Self-confidence
Bias	Discernment
Bitterness, grudge-holding	Refusal to overlook injustice
Caretaking	Compassion
Clinging	Loyalty
Compromise	Negotiability
Compulsive orderliness	Organization, efficiency
Conning	Teaching, encouraging
Connivance	Intelligent strategizing
Control, manipulateness	Leadership, efficiency, coordinating ability
Cowardice	Caution
Cruelty	Anger
Cunning	Forethought
Defensiveness	Preparedness
Demanding	Asking
Dependency on others	Reasonable trust of others

PROJECTED	UNOWNED
<i>If you are strongly upset by others':</i>	<i>Then you have but may not be using your own:</i>
Flattery	Complimenting
Foolhardiness	Bravery
Greed	Self-provision
Guilt	Conscientiousness
Hostility	Assertiveness
Hypocrisy	Ability to "Act as if"
Impatience	Eagerness
Impulsiveness	Spontaneity
Incompetence	Willingness to experiment
Indecision	Openness to possibilities
Insensitivity	Objectivity
Intimidation	Confrontation
Jealousy	Protectiveness
Jumping to conclusions	Intuitiveness
Lack of order	Flexibility
Laziness	Relaxedness
Loneliness	Openness to nurturance
Loquacity	Articulateness
Lying	Imaginativeness
Neediness	Asks for respect of appropriate needs
Obsequiousness	Respect
Perfectionism	Commitment to do things well
Procrastination	Honoring one's own timing
Rigidity	Tenacity
Sarcasm	Wit

PROJECTED	UNOWNED
<i>If you are strongly upset by others':</i>	<i>Then you have but may not be using your own:</i>
Selfishness	Self-nurturance
Self-pity	Self-forgiveness
Sense of obligation	Choice
Slyness	Shrewdness
Submissiveness	Cooperation, docility
Tactless bluntness	Frank candidness
Taking for granted	Accepting
Vengefulness	Justice

Using the preceding listings, here is a way of working with the negative Shadow:

I am strongly upset when others are **controlling**.

I acknowledge that I am **controlling**, though I may not see it right now.

I have **efficiency and leadership skills** that I have not fully used.

I choose to *act as if* I had a high level of **leadership ability** without being **controlling**.

An automatic shift will then occur with three results:

1. Controlling behavior by others will become simply an object of observation. You will be informed, but not affected by it. You will be a witness, not an antagonist.
2. Your own subtly controlling ways will vanish.
3. Your coordinating and leadership skills will emerge automatically and with ease.

Only that which is really ourselves has the power to heal.

—Carl Jung