

C. G. Jung Society, Seattle



Inside Pages

Member-to-Member

Spring 2001

C.G. Jung on Mid-Life, Confession and Ageing

Volume 1, Issue 4

Middle-life Unfolding

Middle life is the moment of greatest unfolding, when a man still gives himself to his work with his whole strength and his whole will. But in this very moment evening is born, and the second half of life begins. Passion now changes her face and is called duty; "I want" becomes the inexorable "I must," and the turnings of the pathway that once brought surprise and discovery become dulled by custom. The wine has fermented and begins to settle and clear. Conservative tendencies develop if all goes well; instead of looking forward one looks backward, most of the time involuntarily, and one begins to take stock, to see how one's life has developed up to this point. The real motivations are sought and real discoveries are made. The critical survey of himself and his fate enables a man to recognize his peculiarities. But these insights do not come to him easily; they are gained only through the severest shocks.

— C.G. Jung, "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship,"
in Collected Works 17, *The Development of Personality*, para. 331a

Confession to Another

Most people need someone to confess to, otherwise the basis of experience is not sufficiently real. They do not "hear" themselves, cannot contrast themselves with something different, and so they have no outside "control." Everything flows inwards and is answered only by oneself, not by another. It makes an enormous difference whether I confess my guilt only to myself or to another person.

— C.G. Jung, "Depth Psychology and Self-Knowledge,"
in Collected Works 18, *Miscellany*, para. 17

Did You Know?

- ✓ The Society Library has audio tapes of Friday lectures?
- ✓ You can search a computer diskette containing databases (in Microsoft Excel) on all Society Library holdings to find books or journal articles on your topics of interest?
- ✓ You can ask the Library to mail your own copy of the holdings diskette for your convenience?

Inside this Issue

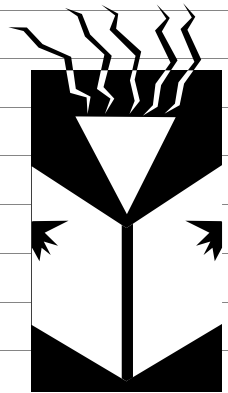
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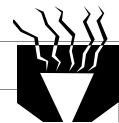
A Women’s Reading Group

Another way to “do Jung” is to form a reading group. I meet regularly with a group of senior women in Bellingham. We meet once a week for 2½ to 3 hours in the early afternoon at one of our houses. We start with coffee, tea and desserts, and then settle in for reading and discussion of our current book. Often we substitute listening to a tape or watching a video. All of us freely contribute other items of interest such as a review of a movie or a theater event, current events (especially political), and lectures we have attended. Several of us heard Dr. Oliver Sacks speak recently at Western Washington University. We feel free to relate to personal experience in terms of the topic in discussion. Recent readings have included Nor Hall’s *The Moon and the Virgin* and Huston Smith’s *The World’s Religions*. I have provided handouts of papers on the cgjungpage.org and other members have brought book passages from their individual reading that have made a mark on them.

We all travel locally and afar so our attendance fluctuates, but we decided not to let the group become larger than ten and it has been stable at that number for six years. We range in age from 60 to 79. Although we no longer read strictly Jung, the paradigm remains the framework in which much of our discussion is carried out. All of us have a longstanding interest in Jung. Most of us have taught at the university or secondary level in a variety of disciplines. We have backgrounds in art, classics, French, nursing, psychology, sociology and the sciences. Most of us garden. Several of our members also belong to “Great Books” groups. We bring a variety of background experience and personalities, and although none of us is afraid to voice an opinion, we have a high degree of respect for each other and our individual differences. That appears to be the essence of why our group thrives.



We start with coffee, tea and desserts...

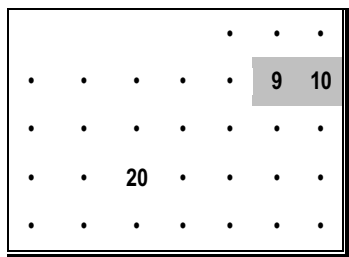


On a personal note: I have been reading *Jung’s Map of the Soul* (Murray Stein) side-by-side with *The Cambridge Companion to Jung* (Dawson and Young-Eisendrath, Eds.). I am supplementing this with Jung, especially the first four chapters to *Aion* (added at a later date and a good summarization of his ideas) and the essay, “On the Nature of the Psyche”. By the way, how many of you are aware (especially you non-professionals) that Jung included several pages of ‘typology’ definitions towards the end of *Psychological Types* (*Collected Works* 6, specifically para. 672-844)? Just another thing I stumbled on for the first time in my perusal of Jung.

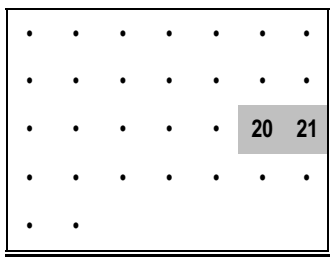


—Linda Sheaffer, Lummi Island

March



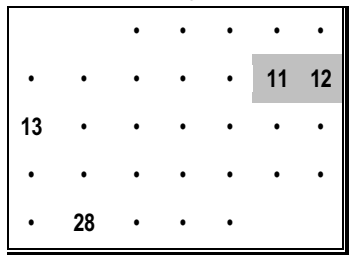
April



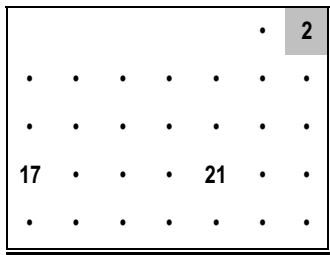
Schedule of Events

- ✓ Mar. 9 — Terrill Gibson, Lecture
- Mar. 10 — T. Gibson, Workshop
- ✓ Mar. 20 — Spring Equinox
- ✓ Apr. 20 — Anne de Vore, Lecture
- Apr. 21 — A. de V., Workshop
- ✓ May 11 — Sachiko Reese, Lecture
- May 12 — S. T. Reese, Workshop
- ✓ May 13 — Great Mothers Day
- ✓ May 28 — Memorial Day
- ✓ Jun. 2 — Annual Members Meeting
- ✓ Jun. 17 — Great Fathers Day
- ✓ Jun. 21 — Summer Solstice

May



June



Opening the Jungian Door to the Eastside

I intend to offer some interest in Jungian thought convenient to the Eastside (of Lake Washington). At this point I am exploring the possibilities for this idea by planning a study group this spring about the Jungian perspective of the later years of one's life. I call this the "Third Leg of the Journey." My format will be a discussion group based on James Hollis's popular writing, *The Middle Passage from Misery to Meaning*. The group will meet at an Eastside location for eight weeks during April and May. Future topics for study may include Hollis's new book, *Creating a Life*, and "the new god image." Edward Edinger wrote commentary on Jung's exciting challenge to our thinking about deity. For more information about the study groups you may contact me at (425) 453-9384. I am a counselor and educator practicing in the Seattle area for 24 years. I am coming up on 70 years and believe that one does best by teaching what oneself needs to know!

—Lynn Davis Fox, on the Eastside





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Inside Pages •
Member-to-Member

On Ageing and Discovery

The discovery of the value of human personality is reserved for a riper age. For young people the search for personality values is very often a pretext for evading their biological duty.

Conversely, the exaggerated longing of an older person for the sexual values of youth is a short-sighted and often cowardly evasion of a duty which demands recognition of the value of personality and submission to the hierarchy of cultural values.

The young neurotic shrinks back in terror from the expansion of life's duties, the old one from the dwindling of the treasures he has attained.

— C.G. Jung, "Some Crucial Points in Psychoanalysis:
A Correspondence between Dr. Jung and Dr. Loÿ,"
in *Collected Works 4, Freud and Psychoanalysis*, para. 664

A human being would certainly not grow to be seventy or eighty years old if this longevity had no meaning for the species. ... Ageing people should know that their lives are not mounting and expanding, but that an inexorable inner process enforces the contraction of life. For a young person it is almost a sin, or at least a danger, to be too preoccupied with himself; but for the ageing person it is a duty and a necessity to devote serious attention to himself.

— C.G. Jung, "The Stages of Life,"
in *Collected Works 8, The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*,
para. 785-787

Everything young grows old, all beauty fades, all heat cools, all brightness dims, and every truth becomes stale and trite. For all these things have taken on shape, and all shapes are worn thin by the working of time; they age, sicken, crumble to dust—unless they change. But change they can, for the invisible spark that generated them is potent enough for infinite generation. No one should deny the danger of the descent, but it *can* be risked. No one *need* risk it, but it is certain that some will. And let those who go down the sunset way do so with open eyes, for it is a sacrifice which daunts even the gods. Yet every descent is followed by an ascent; the vanishing shapes are shaped anew, and a truth is valid in the end only if it suffers change and bears witness in new images, in new tongues, like a new wine that is put into new bottles.

— C.G. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, *Collected Works 5*, para. 553