**Jung: The Man and His Seminal Ideas:**

**The Transcendent Function—At Work Consciously and Unconsciously**

*Presented by Kathleen Wiley, Jungian Analyst*

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**Definitions:**

*Archetype as Opposites*: Archetype as image is upward looking to ideas, creative inspiration, and spirit. Archetype as instinct is downward looking to biology and drives.

*Ego-Self axis*: a term coined by Erich Neumann to describe the conscious flow of energy between the ego/self and the total Self

*The Transcendent Function***:** an organic, psychological function whereby a uniting third emerges from the tension of two opposites; by engaging dream images in active imagination, we invite the Transcendent Function to offer a uniting third from the tension of conscious and unconscious

*Shadow:* Personal unconscious

In popular thought, the “negative” side of personality, sum of unpleasant qualities we like to hide and insufficiently developed functions and contents of personal unconscious

“The devil is a variant of the ‘shadow’ archetype, i.e., of the dangerous aspect of the unrecognized dark half of the personality.” (*CW 7*, par. 152)

**Quotes from Jung**

It is called transcendent because it makes transition from one attitude to another organically possible, without loss of consciousness. (Jung, CW8, par. 145)

(Following quotes Cited From: C. G. Jung. “The Collected Works of C.G. Jung: Complete Digital Edition.” iBooks. Essay from which quote comes is noted.)

“This function of mediation between the opposites I have termed **the transcendent function,** by which I mean nothing mysterious, but merely a combined function of conscious and unconscious elements, or, as in mathematics, a common function of real and imaginary quantities.”

(“Schiller’s Ideas on the Type Problem”)

“I have called this process in its totality the **transcendent function,** “function” being here understood not as a basic function but as a complex function made up of other functions, and “transcendent” not as denoting a metaphysical quality but merely the fact that this function facilitates a transition from one attitude to another. The raw material shaped by thesis and antithesis, and in the shaping of which the opposites are united, is the living symbol. Its profundity of meaning is inherent in the raw material itself, the very stuff of the psyche, transcending time and dissolution; and its configuration by the opposites ensures its sovereign power over all the psychic functions.” (“Schiller’s Ideas on the Type Problem”)

“ The process of coming to terms with the unconscious is a true labor, a work which involves both action and suffering. It has been named the **“transcendent function”** because it represents a function based on real and “imaginary,” or rational and irrational, data, thus bridging the yawning gulf between conscious and unconscious. It is a natural process, a manifestation of the energy that springs from the tension of opposites, and it consists in a series of fantasy-occurrences which appear spontaneously in dreams and visions.” (“The Synthetic or Constructive Method”)

“**The transcendent function** does not proceed without aim and purpose but leads to the revelation of the essential man. *It is in the first place a purely natural process, which may in some cases pursue its course without the knowledge or assistance of the individual and can sometimes forcibly accomplish itself in the face of opposition*. The meaning and purpose of the process is the realization, in all its aspects, of the personality originally hidden away in the embryonic germ-plasm; the production and unfolding of the original, potential wholeness.”

(“The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious”)

“The *secret of alchemy was in* ***fact the transcendent function***, the transformation of personality through the blending and fusion of the noble with the base components, of the differentiated with the inferior functions, of the conscious with the unconscious.”

( “The Technique of Differentiation Between the Ego and the Figures of the Unconscious”)

***The results of the Transcendent Function***

“By building a conscious relationship to the unconscious, we can mitigate the negative effects of the unconscious.”

“Taking it seriously does not mean taking it literally, but it does mean giving the unconscious credit, so that it has a chance to co-operate with consciousness instead of automatically disturbing it.” Jung, *CW 8, par. 184*

*But says Jung, “these processes are steeped with Mystery’ they pose riddles with which the human mind will long wrestle for a solution, perhaps in vain. For in the last analysis, it is extremely doubtful whether human reason is a suitable instrument for this purpose. Not for nothing did alchemy style itself an art, feeling—rightly so—that it was concerned with creative processes that can be truly grasped only by experience, though intellect may give them a name.” Jung, Alchemy, pars. 219, 254 (quoted in Jacobi, p. 144-45)*