

One Myth, Two Myth, Red Book, Black Books: Journaling as a Record of Personal Mythology
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“Symbols touch the part of you gripped by a belief in the psyche from which they have come. That’s where the madness starts and your deepest mythology begins to speak its own myth. When the Virgin births the Christ and you are given a clue of all you will sacrifice for the sake of your symbols.”

– Sheila Petrucci (as cut from the essay below)

The way to find your own myth is to determine those traditional symbols that speak to you and use them, you might say, as bases for meditation. Let them work on you.

Mythological images are the images by which the consciousness is put in touch with the unconscious. That’s what they are. When you don’t have your mythological images, or when your consciousness rejects them for some reason or other, you are out of touch with your own deepest part. I think that’s the purpose of a mythology that we can live by. We have to find the one that we are in fact living by and know what it is so that we can direct our craft with competence... I think one of the great calamities of contemporary life is that the religions that we have inherited have insisted on the concrete historicity of their symbols. The Virgin Birth, for example, or the ascension into heaven – these are symbols that are found in the mythologies of the world. **Their primary reference must be to the psyche from which they have come.* They speak to us of something in ourselves. They cannot primarily refer to historical events. And one of the great problems that is confronting us now is that the authority of the institutions that have been presenting us with these symbols – the religions in which we have been raised – has come into doubt simply because they have insisted on talking about their underlying myths as historical events somewhere. The image of the Virgin Birth: what does it refer to? A historical, biological problem? Or is it a psychological, spiritual metaphor?... Survival, security, personal relationships, prestige, self-development—in my experience, those are exactly the values that a mythically inspired person doesn’t live for. They have to do with the primary biological mode as understood by human consciousness. Mythology begins where madness starts. A person who is truly gripped by a calling, a dedication, by a belief, by a zeal, will sacrifice his security, will sacrifice even his life, will sacrifice personal relationships, will sacrifice prestige, and will think nothing of personal development; he will give himself entirely to his myth.

– excerpted from *Pathways to Bliss*, by Joseph Campbell (*emphasis mine)

“Myths are public dreams – dreams are private myths.” – Joseph Campbell

Questions to journal with:

* Tell me how to find you in your dreams. “Look for . . .”

* What do your dreams/does your mythology

Look like . . .

Taste like . . .

Sound like . . .

Feel like . . .

Smell like . . .

* What populates your dreams/your mythology? (Repetition/recurrence can be key here.)

Animals

People

Relics

Sacred Objects

Settings

References/Resources

Jung, Carl G. *Liber Novus*, facsimile edition, reader’s edition, audiobook

Byock, Satya Doyle *The Salome Institute*, Director: podcast, 28 episodes on *TRB*

Schul, Jeanne Faculty Pacifica and The Haden Institute, spiritual director/dream worker

