



OCTOBER 25 2020 | ISSUE 7

SHADOW WORK

The Official Weekly Newsletter of Searchinsachin

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU THROUGH

Book Recommendations:

The Presence Process by Michael Brown

The Work by Byron Katie

The Completion Process by Teal Swan

Background music Recommendation while reading the Newsletter: [Of Storms and Half-light](#) by [Daniel Ran](#)

Music Recommendation: [Indigo](#) by [Trevor Hall](#)

Affirmation: I seek to see my shadows, love them, accept them, and move past them.

WHAT IS THE SHADOW?

Shadow is the rejected, repressed, abandoned aspects of our identity which were deemed unacceptable, bad, evil by the socio-cultural conditioning in our childhood.

There are also positive attributes within the shadow which become repressed which we will discuss.

The word 'Shadow' may seem like a mysterious and dark word and Shadow Work especially seems like an occultist and dark practice, but that is not the case.

It is often misunderstood and an overlooked idea within the psychological as well as spiritual communities. It is the foundation of all other therapeutic work. It is the great purge, the dark night of the soul, the catharsis, the re-birth, the rising from the ashes, the integration. This is where the spiritual journey begins, truly begins.

Carl G. Jung writes, "Closer examination of the dark characteristics — that is, the inferiorities constituting the shadow — reveals that they have an emotional nature, a kind of autonomy, and accordingly an obsessive or, better, possessive quality. Emotion, incidentally, is not an activity of the individual but something that happens to him. Affects occur usually where adaptation is weakest, and at the same time they reveal the reason for its weakness, namely a certain degree of inferiority and the existence of a lower level of personality. On this lower level with its uncontrolled or scarcely controlled emotions one behaves more or less like a primitive, who is not only the passive victim of his affects but also singularly incapable of moral judgment."

The above paragraph is deeply revealing about the nature of the shadows and can help the seeker define Shadows more accurately.

As stated, we see, Shadows are lower order personalities that are autonomous, they are emotional thus irrational, are the weak spots within the Self, they can become compulsive and obsessive, and are inherently primitive (lust, greed, anger, jealousy, etc), a weakness within the moral judgment, and it is the lack of awareness of the shadows that makes the Self a victim and morally handicapped.



Why are we bewildered, fascinated, surprised, shocked, and intrigued by our individual and collective human condition? Isn't it obvious by now that we are messed up? But we still seem quite fascinated and frustrated by the events in the world and within our relationships.

We know all of these imbalances in the world, but we still expect others to act a certain way, correct ways, though we find ourselves doing the same, and then we rarely catch ourselves in the unconscious moments, we blame it on the other for making us do it, somehow we are always right, good, acceptable, and the world does not understand us. We are even more shocked and intrigued by our very own fantasies and unrequited desires which we often encounter in our mid-life or late 50s, we are paralysed by the occurrences within the dreamscape in the dark hours of the night. We want healthy relationships and a lover to share our lives with, we need our parents to understand us, and our children to listen to us for we know what is best for them, but somehow it does not work out, we are indeed complex and fragmented beings, where every fragment of the Self seems autonomous.

Why are we suffering our very own selves? What is the greatest productivity hack ever? Is it using Notion? Is it Insight Timer? Is it doing Yoga? Is it getting an astrology reading? Is it positive psychology? Affirmations? Law of attraction?





THE BIRTH OF THE SHADOW

The roots of our shadows go way back into our childhood when the process of socialization began.

This socialization happens primarily through our caregivers, that is, usually our parents. But also secondarily, through everyone else that we interact with - the kindergarten teachers, the extended family, cousins, friends, nannies, television and cartoons, religious ideology, and the rest. As we are being socialised, we are taught that some things are acceptable and others are not, some things are good and some are bad, some things will get you rejected and others will get you accepted. All of this happens for a very important reason - if we are not socialised or civilised, society in general will collapse. It is on this very socio-cultural socialization and ego and moral development that society is built.

But it is when the process of socialization takes place in an unconscious fashion, automatically, for instance, when the child has been birthed to live the unlived life of the parent, when it is birthed in a family of the brokenhearted, or to the angry father, or the over-protective mother, etc, this is when the complexity arises - from the unhealed unintegrated fragmented parts.



The Ego/Identity rejects anything that the Superego does not consider to be acceptable, and thus casts it into the shadow side or the personal unconscious.

That which gets rejected, gets casted away, repressed, rejected, and abandoned by the ego. The parents are the freudian Superego, that is, the ideal which the child, the ego, must adhere to in order to survive.

These repressed contents become subconscious autosuggestions which drive the child to subscribe to certain beliefs, have certain triggers, proclivities, talents, and becomes the foundation of all the other choices.

We begin to take up adult roles in adult bodies, but much of our behavior is still childish and egocentric. We are children in adult bodies.

Our identity becomes fragmented into various sub-personalities that either come out in dreams, under the influence of alcohol, or triggers and projections in social interactions, or other more complex compulsions and obsessions, and much more.

All of these fragmented unconscious sub-personalities need to be consciously integrated.



The repressed contents of the shadow side are generally negative, such as, jealousy, sexual fantasies, sorrows, complex beliefs towards the idea of god, religious ideas, etc, but they can also have positive contents, that is, in case when the superego deems certain generally acceptable and good behaviors as unacceptable.

These can be, writing skills, being assertive, dancing, self-expression through the body, spiritual inclinations, the urge to not harm animals and become vegetarian, etc. These may be repressed due to familial and cultural beliefs such as "girls should not be assertive" "boys cannot dance" "it is unspiritual for women to dance" "writing is reserved for men" "having a partner before marriage is evil" "men must eat meat", "sexuality is evil", etc.

These contents of the shadow side create imbalances within the ego. We may have issues with authority, sexual excesses, impotence, money issues, inability to work in a team setting, disappointing friendships, dramatic love relationships, spiritual egoity, science vs religion, issues with assertiveness, boundary issues, lack of self-love and self-worth, body issues, eating disorders, and so much more due to these unresolved repressed contents of the shadow side.

INDIVIDUAL SHADOWS TO COLLECTIVE SHADOWS

The individual shadows influence the socio-cultural foundations of any given society, and over the course of hundreds of centuries create collective shadows or the collective unconscious.

The Individual and the Collective consciousness are deeply intertwined, and both of them have a shadow side.

A personality cannot be judged in isolation to the culture within which it is born, and the culture cannot be judged without reviewing the individuals that constitute it.

War mongering, religious fanaticism, political polarisation, technocracy, technomic wars, and the overall global political and economic environment is a reflection of the unintegrated aspects of the Individual shadows which are being projected on a collective scale and birthing and renewing the collective unconscious.

Twitter is a perfect place to know the collective shadow of humanity.

Humanity indeed needs healing, and the process begins with you, in your room, right now, as you read this.



SHADOWS OF SOCIETY

Individual shadows are projected on the collective, and the collective shadows foster the individual shadows. This cyclical loop requires only one thing as the first step, Shadow Work on an individual level. But before we get into what is shadow work and how we can do it, let's become aware of some of the shadow aspects of Society.

As Connie Zweig and Jeremiah Abrams listed, the Shadows in Society can be seen in the following:

1) In an uncontrolled power drive for knowledge and domination (expressed in the amorality of the science and the unregulated marriage of business and technology).

2) In a self-righteous compulsion to help and cure others (expressed in the distorted, codependent role of those in the helping professions and the greed of doctors and pharmaceutical companies).

3) In a fast-paced, dehumanised workplace (expressed by the apathy of an alienated work force, the unplanned obsolescence produced by automation, and the hubris of success).



4) In the maximization of business growth and progress (expressed in leveraged buyouts, profiteering, insider trading, and the savings and loan debacle).

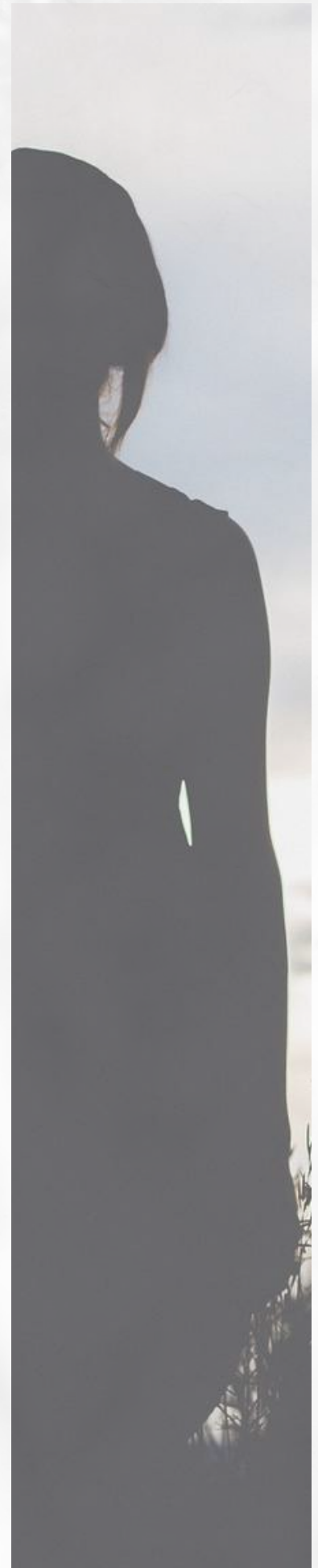
5) In a materialistic hedonism (expressed in conspicuous consumption, exploitative advertising, waste, and rampant pollution).

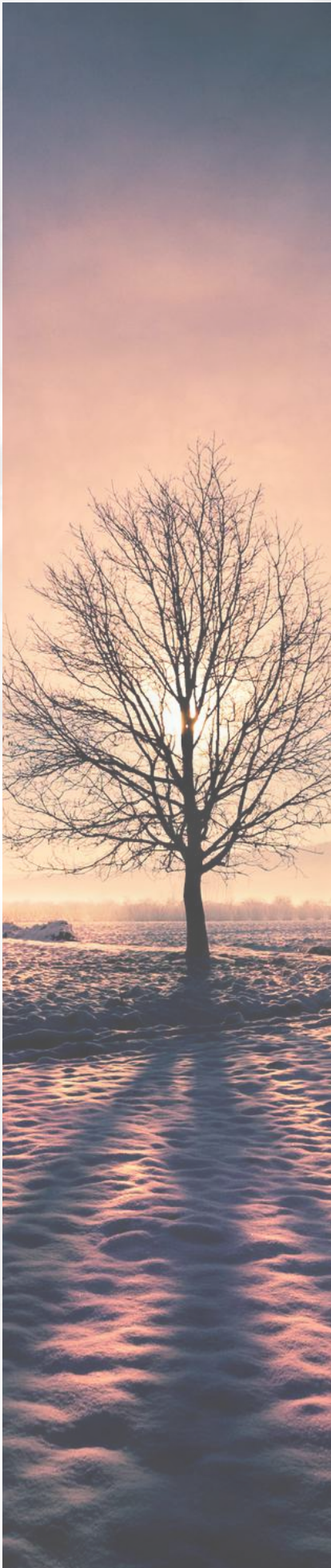
6) In a desire to control our innately uncontrollable intimate lives (expressed in widespread narcissism, personal exploitation, manipulation of others, and abuse of women and children).

7) In our ever-present fear of death (expressed in an obsession with health and fitness, diet, drugs, and longevity at any price).

Whichever of the above triggers something within you, is the one where there is some shadow content to be explored and integrated. We will look into this more as we proceed.

Anger, Lust, Greed, Egoity are the essential ingredients of the individual and thus the collective shadow garnered over thousands of years of evolution of consciousness. The unintegrated human - when the animal and human and the divine do not know each other.





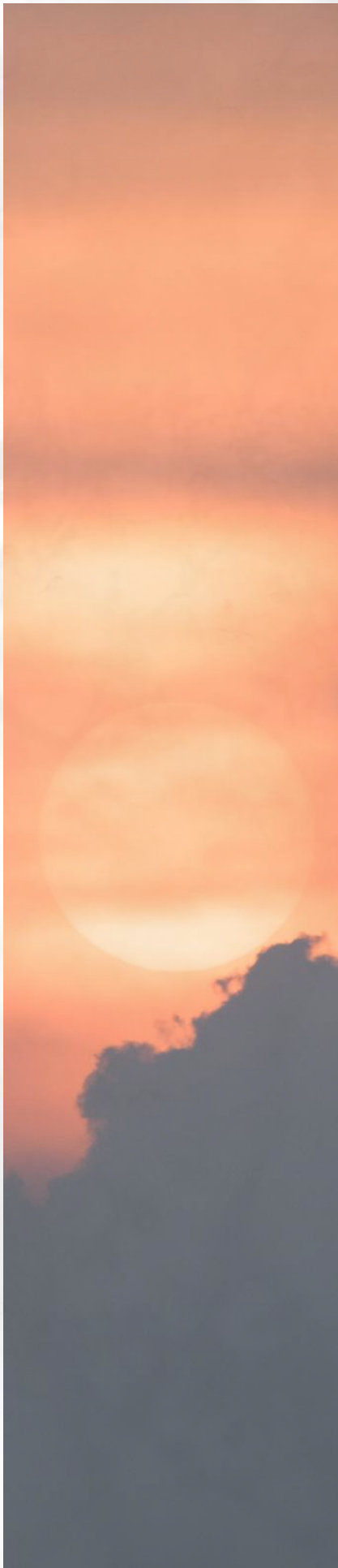
WHAT IS SHADOW WORK?

The goal of Shadow Work is Integration, and becoming conscious of the repressed contents of the Self, and the finality is Self-Knowledge in all of its psycho-physical as well as psycho-spiritual meanings.

All the repressed shadow contents of the Self, are illuminated through various Shadow Work processes and the awareness and understanding of these contents makes one Whole.

The Self as theorised by Jung is Consciousness itself or we can call it the Objective Awareness, within which everything else takes place, including the Ego, Superego, Shadows, etc, it can be correlated with the Atman as Jung noted.

Shadow Work is essentially Self-awareness work. It is the wilberian "Cleaning Up" process. As the individual is "Waking Up" to the absolute spiritual truths of existence, and "Growing Up" to the relative psychological truths of the world, the Cleaning Up of the shadows becomes a necessity. Ken Wilber also explains the importance of Showing Up consistently by first seeing the value in Shadow Work and all the other psycho-spiritual practices for our individual and collective evolution.



Jung writes, "Hence it is of the greatest importance that the ego should be anchored in the world of consciousness and that consciousness should be reinforced by a very precise adaptation. For this, certain virtues like attention, conscientiousness, patience, etc., are of great value on the moral side, just as accurate observation of the symptomatology of the unconscious and objective self-criticism are valuable on the intellectual side."

So, on the one hand the Ego must be anchored in the world of consciousness through attention, conscientiousness, patience, and other moral virtues (which we incorrectly see as repressing the urges), while, on the other hand, intellectual articulation of the matters of the unconscious and the necessary self-inquiry are needed as well.

Both of which in tandem allow for the integration of the shadow to take place. Too much chaos and you will find yourself in the underworld of sorrow, defeated, and depression, and too much order and the rigid structures of the ego identity formed through the idealism of superego will lead to festering of shadows within the unconscious.

HOW TO SPOT THE SHADOW?

The shadows become revealed, as Connie Zweig and Jeremiah Abrams listed, in the following:

- 1) Over-exaggerated feelings about others.
- 2) In negative feedback from others who serve as our mirrors.
- 3) In those interactions in which we continually have the same troubling effect on several different people.
- 4) In our impulsive and inadvertent acts.
- 5) In situations in which we are humiliated.
- 6) In our exaggerated anger about other people's faults.

We explain them away and invalidate what we feel by calling it 'Drama' or 'Weather patterns' or 'Hormones' or 'just a bad day', etc. We believe that positive focus or positive psychology can overrun and dissolve the repressed contents of the Soul-Ego complex. These red flags is where one can begin the Shadow Work from. These are the weak spot from where the light enters. It requires one to take 'Radical Responsibility' as told by Integral Zen master Doshin Roshi. Remember the goal is Integration and not further rejection and repression.





HOW TO DO SHADOW WORK?

We essentially use our patterns, triggers, projections which are essentially revealing to us our fears, judgments, and dislikes.

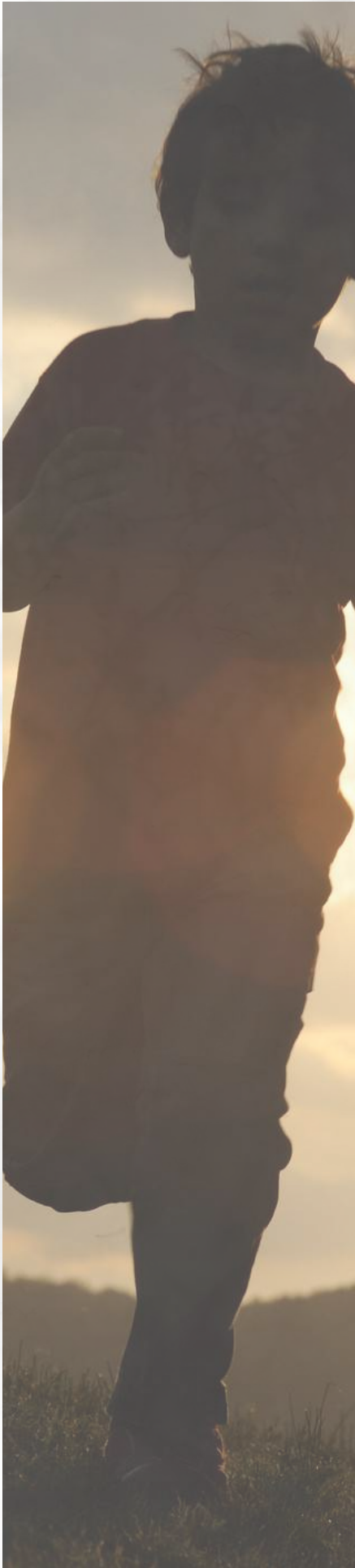
Here are some ways to begin your Shadow Work journey:

1) Reliving the childhood by actively recalling the memories and seeing the pain points and the high points. Write these down. Bring them to the surface and allow them to be felt again - for they are unconsciously being felt by others in your relationships and you yourself anyway.

2) Recognize your triggers and seeing them as messengers from the unconscious.

When a trigger arises ask yourself two simple questions : How do I feel? and How often do I feel this way? When was the first time I felt this way?

3) Observe what arises and feel it fully. Do not try to make yourself feel better through any external stimulation. Let the emotion run its course through the body. Allow yourself to grieve and do all of it wholly as it arises. You might feel like you are dying, but you are rebirthing.



4) Seek help whenever necessary. Keep a therapist handy. Someone you can trust and feel comfortable with, and someone who can act as an anchor of clarity in times of confusion. A therapist comes from an objective and non-judgmental space, and you can switch and choose a therapist, there are no strings attached, which is great since, that is not the case if you seek refuge from friends or family - they will get scared to hear about the repressed contents of the shadow self.

5) Love and Compassion for whatever arises is a must. This arises by developing understanding and perspective for all the retrieved contents. This simple attitude can make or break your practice. The Ego can freak out and run back to its original state. (See: regressive restoration of persona).

One may start making excuses such as I do not have time or I will do this later.

6) Take your time with Shadow Work. You may need to take some time off from the world for this passive yin introspective practice.

9) Use a well-developed process such as Byron Katie's The Work or Mondo Zen practices, or get an Astrological Shadow Work guidance from me.

10) Reading and understanding and learning about shadow work through your own intellect and intuition is very helpful. If possible, you can learn about Shadow Work through a professional as well. I will add some reference material for you to explore at the end of the newsletter.

11) Journal the retrieved contents and observations. Recording them in some form allows one to look back and review. This is good to notice patterns in behaviors, observe new patterns, and discover new insight into oneself. Journaling about the shadow contents is in and of can be therapeutic.

12) Honesty is the best policy. The only one getting deceived through the lies of the ego is the Self. The Ego and its many constituents will seek devious ways to avoid this entire activity. Resistances will arise in various names, shapes, and forms.

13) Remind yourself of the benefits as you proceed, and remind yourself of how far you have come as you progress.

14) Compassion is the second best policy. After honesty, the bitter truths about yourself that will be revealed will require self-hugs and hot chocolates to be digested. Forgiveness and Compassion are best friends.



15) Learn about the archetypes as told by Jung, James Hillman, Erich Neumann, etc. These will act as great resources and reveal to you how the human experience and the evolution of consciousness has a deeper underlying archetypal theme.

16) Inner-dialogue with the people within the shadows - ask them - what do you want? what do you have to teach me? what can I learn from you? Understand it, know it, be with it. Talk to the shadows and understand the reason for their presence.

17) Exploring your femininity and masculinity for both males and females. The Anima and Animus, the two archetypes that lurk within the collective as well as personal unconscious, as theorised by Jung are a great place to start. But Sun and Moon, in Jyotisha as well as in Western Astrology can be intensely revealing especially when seen through one's psycho-spiritual blueprint, that is, one's birth chart.

18) Dream are the most revealing, as theorised and practically demonstrated by Freud and Jung. Dream Interpretation work is very powerful to connect with the Unconscious.



HERE IS A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF SOME OF THE TRIED
AND TESTED PROCESSES WHICH CAN BE OF GREAT
BENEFIT TO YOU:

THE PRESENCE PROCESS BY MICHAEL BROWN

THE COMPLETION PROCESS BY TEAL SWAM

THE WORK BY BYRON KATIE

THE 3-2-1 SHADOW PROCESS BY KEN WILBER

A COURSE IN MIRACLE. BY HELEN SCHUCMAN

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO DREAM INTERPRETATION BY
MARSHA TRIMBLE DUNSTAN

" UNTIL YOU MAKE THE
UNCONSCIOUS
CONSCIOUS, IT WILL
DIRECT YOUR LIFE AND
YOU WILL CALL IT FATE."

- CARL G. JUNG



ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS TO DIG DEEPER

Asking the right questions is more important than seeking the right answers. In Shadow Work there are no right answers. It is the idea of Right and Wrong answers in the first place that have birthed the shadows. As you integrate the shadow contents, this becomes more clear. Ask the right questions through out the practice, such as (make this list as long as possible in your journals).

- 1) Was I completely accepted in my childhood?
Was I completely accepted in high school?
 - 2) What behaviors and emotions do I judge in my self and others?
 - 3) What was expected of me as a child?
 - 4) If I am not afraid of anything, what choices will I make?
 - 5) Whose love did I crave more in my family?
What did I have to become in order to get that love? Have I become that?
 - 6) How often do I feel negative emotions? What are negative and positive emotions?
-



7) What do I feel ashamed of?

8) Do I ask other people to tell me what is true and what is false for me?

9) Do I try to fix, save, rescue other people even when they do not want to be rescued? Do I take it personally? Is it my personal responsibility?

10) Do I feel guilty when I have to say 'No' to someone for something?

11) Do I feel responsible for other people's emotions?

12) Who do I constantly compare myself to? Am I justified in this habit of comparison with others?

13) Who makes me angry/greedy/lusty/sad/enslaved, etc? Why do they make me feel that way? How do I make them feel?

14) What was the childhood of my father and mother like? Where do they come from?

15) What advice would I give to someone who is feeling the way I feel? Can I take that advice?

THE PROBLEM OF RESISTANCE

As Jung noted, "Although, with insight and good will, the shadow can to some extent be assimilated into the conscious personality, experience shows that there are certain features which offer the most obstinate **resistance** to moral control and prove almost impossible to influence. **These resistances are usually bound up with projections, which are not recognised as such, and their recognition is a moral achievement beyond the ordinary.** While some traits peculiar to the shadow can be recognized without too much difficulty as one's own personal qualities, in this case both insight and good will are unavailing because the cause of the emotion appears to lie, beyond all possibility of doubt, in the other person. **No matter how obvious it may be to the neutral observer that it is a matter of projections, there is little hope that the subject will perceive this himself.** He must be convinced that he throws a very long shadow before he is willing to withdraw his emotionally-toned projections from their object."

The fundamental requirement for the dissolution of resistance requires surrender, immense humility, heightened femininity (Yin). Dissolution of resistance in and of itself requires Shadow Work.



The problem of resistance is self-explanatory, and much of the healing work is initially about dissolving the resistance that we feel. The self-destructive tendencies do not seek to be recognised. One can even say, the shadows protect themselves through the resistances.

As Jung wrote, "The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge, and it therefore, as a rule, meets with considerable resistance. Indeed, self-knowledge as a psychotherapeutic measure frequently requires much painstaking work extending over a long period."

The question of Effort arises due to the presence of Resistance. To attain effortless effort, that is, a state of patient flow state is in and of itself a huge achievement and goal of Shadow Work.

It is important to say that Shadow Work is Work by the end of the day and thus takes effort in the beginning if one has resistance to Work in general. It does not feel very pleasant at first.



AWARENESS

Through becoming aware of the triggers, projections, painful emotions, negative emotions. Feel fully.



FORGIVENESS

Forgive the follies of others and yourself by developing an understanding of contents of the Shadows.



INTEGRATION

Accept it through gratitude. You OWN the shadow by seeing yourself as a mix of good and evil.



SURRENDER

After integration, you may find a deeper and greater purpose. This is when a great sense of surrender arises. This surrender cannot be understood intellectually, it is a feeling, and those who have done the work will understand what it is.



BENEFITS OF SHADOW WORK

One must learn enough about the benefits, meaning, and overall goal of Shadow Work to dissolve the resistance. This makes the entire process a bit smoother.

Reminding yourself of the many benefits and actually seeing them as your progress on your journey into the depths of the unconscious, will allow you to gain courage and remain rational in moments of overpowering emotional entropies. The breakthroughs that you will make through this seemingly 'intangible' and 'impracticable' work are very real and deeply empowering. This you must deeply remember.

As one continually practices it, there are moments of breakthrough and there is psychical release where one feels lighter and joyful, evolved and open-hearted. It also brings many new possibilities to the forefront.

The greatest of all things that we must know that Shadow Work is a tool and this it can be learnt. It does not need expertise, but only expert opinion and guidance at certain points.



There are numerous benefits, if you haven't guessed already, here is a comprehensive list:

1) Self-acceptance and Self-awareness - The rejected and disowned parts of oneself floating around in the limbo of the unconscious become loved and transmuted. Awareness in and of itself leads to a partial and crude form of self-acceptance.

2) Authenticity - One become very real with oneself and others. There are no games to be played with respect to what one wants and what one can share with others. One comes from a place of sincerity.

3) A newfound capacity to self-regulate negative emotion without the need for external sensory pleasure stimulus.

4) Courage to take risks that is rooted in a more developed inner wisdom (guidance) mechanism.

5) Self-confidence - The ability to confide in oneself in times of distress is a superpower. One does what one says and says what one does. One believes that they can handle anything or learn how to handle anything, and one does not always need to go at it alone.



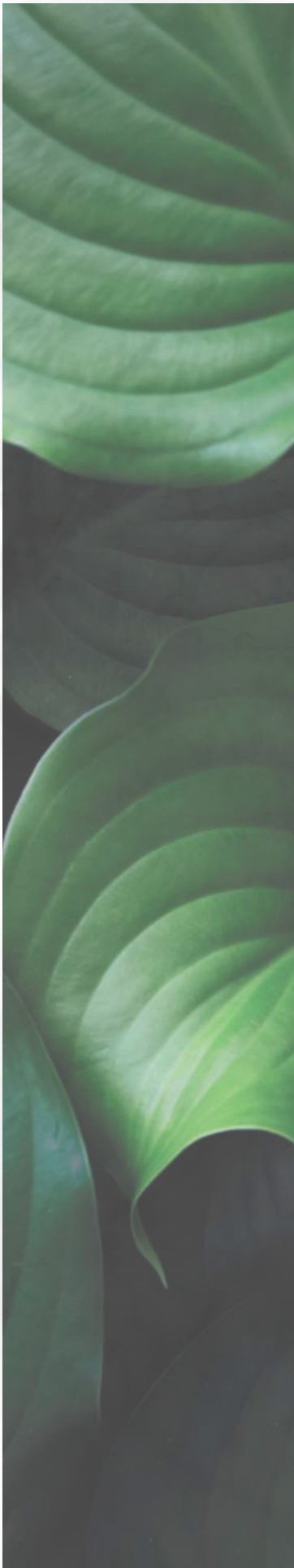
6) Seeing things more objectively, thus, being a better judge for the issues of those around you.

7) Healing of past traumas and traumatic relationships - Shadow Work gives us a practical understanding of forgiveness and compassion. A deep change of heart.

8) Improved creativity and discovering new hobbies, interests, and talents. One does not only discover the very negative aspects within oneself that were always only seen in others, but one also discovers the very talents and capabilities that were only seen in others.

9) True desires are revealed and can be approached directly rather than in an unconscious and indirect fashion. Oh! I need a lover in my life even though I am 50 years old. That is my real need which is being unconsciously being projected in all these unconscious ways - over-mothering or inconspicuous relationships, etc. One can work out the more deeper causes thereof.

10) Allows you to see the underlying psychophysical and spiritual patterns of existence itself. This is if you go all the way. The Philosopher's stone is discovered within one's heart.



11) A huge improvement in all relationships and especially love relationships. This is because in love relationships the persona that we uphold for the world is at its weakest, and the contents of the shadows can breakout more easily and become more self-evident to the partner.

12) Improvement in physicality as well. If one is trying to gain or lose weight, the unconscious resistances and other deeper shadows do not allow this to take place. We call these karmic and inevitable. But that is not only not true and disempowering but also nullifies the whole point of being birthed as a human being. A human being can override its instinctual animal nature and realize the Self and not just remain within an Ego-Superego complex.

13) The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious are embodied consciously and played out wholehearted.

14) The underlying patterns of existence become self-evident. The subtle becomes obvious - response over reaction become a natural state.

15) An ability to listen to your deeper voice and other people's advice without resistance, then actually implementing it.

MID-LIFE CRISIS

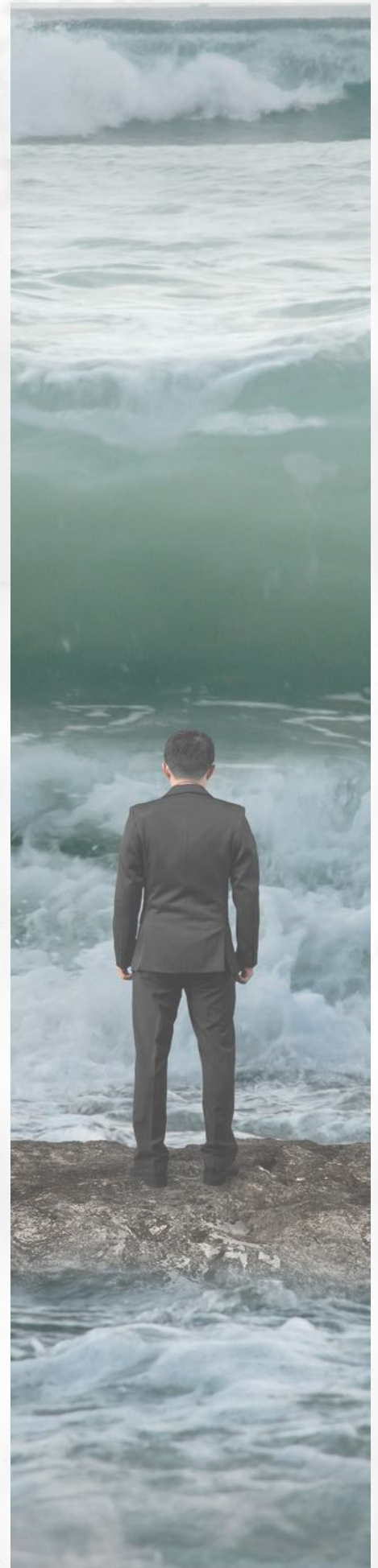
The density and the intensity of the shadow self comes forth in full capacitation between the age of 40 and 60. This become obvious with the principles of Vedic Astrology or Jyotisha as we will discuss in a later section.

It is in the mid-life when the dam of the unconscious breaks and chaos ensues. We often become overwhelmed and drift into psychological chaos and physiological diminution.

The actual reasons for the mid-life crisis are rooted in early developmental stages of life. Mid-life crisis is an opportunity to become aware and integrate the shadows.

Any simplistic and shallow explaining away of the psycho-physical and psycho-spiritual chaos during this phase will become the cause of this missed opportunity to rebirth. One will end up feeding the shadows and drift into further chaos. These more empowered unconscious psychological forces will then create even more catastrophic chaos in one's later years of life.

As Doshin Roshi says, "there will either be a breakthrough or a breakdown."

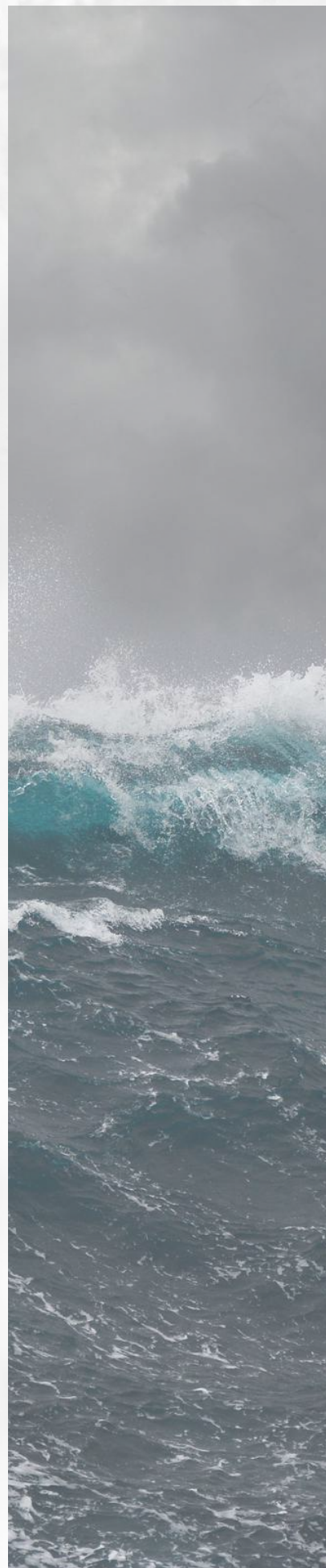


In mid-life there is always a catastrophic revelation either in the form of betrayal from the family members, some sort of injustice, controversy, infidelity, divorce, financial crisis, career transformation, an intellectual breakthrough, spiritual revelation, etc. All of which leads to a breakthrough if the contents are integrated or a breakdown if the shadows go unchecked – the consciousness jumps into a new stage of development.

If the personality becomes conscious and seeks to do a deeper self-analysis, then there is a realisation that there is actually no true safe place in the world. The security paradigm that we work extremely hard to develop crumbles in front of our eyes, and now we must enter the forests and rediscover the true purpose of life.

The Jungian wise old man or the wise old woman archetypal aspects of the collective unconscious are often encountered during this phase.

This is not always possible for everyone, especially when the personality is unconscious. Therefore, there is a massive need for the masses to understand this psychological phenomenon, and there is a profound urgency for more depth psychologists who can help integrate these shadow aspects.





COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

1) Shadow Work is dark and mysterious - The word Shadow brings up dark, mysterious, and negative images, and it is indeed so. It indeed requires courage to step into this self-exploration. But it is a well-known phenomenon and there are real psycho-spiritual tools to do the work. It is not as dark and mysterious as one would like to romanticise it as.

2) Shadow Work is the invention of psychologists. It is a well-known phenomenon in various shamanic cultures, and it is also noticed in various religions. But it is only a 120 years ago that these became articulated and systematised and made to be more methodical and practicable.

3) Seeing my shadows will lead me to be consumed by them. The exact opposite of this is true. This fear is what is keeping them alive and thriving, the fear of becoming conscious of them. In the light of consciousness, the shadows become integrated. Seeing your shadows will allow you not be in control of them.

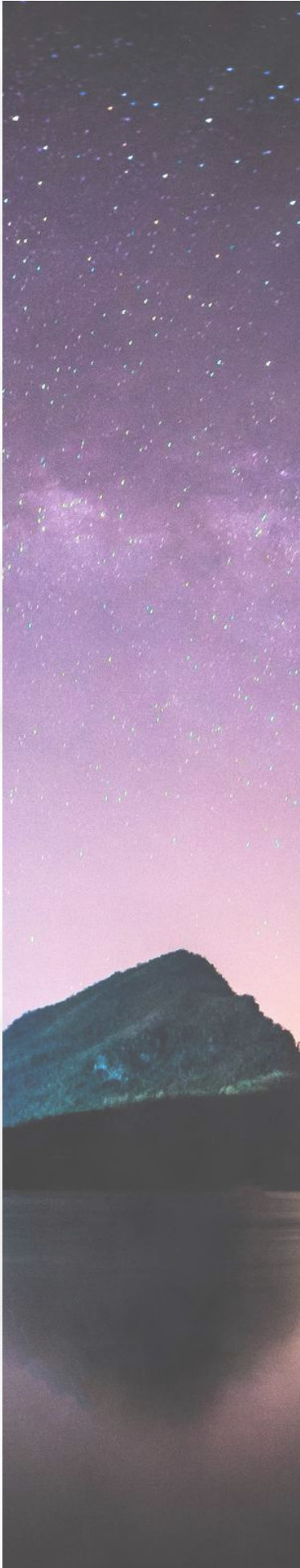


4) Shadow Work can lead to destruction or causes one to do destructive things.

The opposite is true, the more you repress, the more likely it is that you will express, and you will not only know that you are expressing it but you will express it in a deranged fashion. It is only self-evident to others around you, and you are unaware of it. What you resist will indeed persist, and in this case, that which persists is deeply destructive and can indeed be deemed demonic in some cases.

5) Shadows are only the negative aspects of the ego. It is true that the socially unacceptable and the genuinely evil gets repressed into the shadow side but even gifts, capacities, and talents can get locked away into the shadow side. So, it is indeed a goldmine when it comes to discovering an entirely new talent, which got repressed because it was deemed unacceptable and evil by one's socio-cultural conditioning.

6) If I focus only on positive things and affirmations, then I will be able to dissolve my shadows. This is the greatest of all misconceptions, and requires an entire section, and thus, will be discussed in the next section.



7) You do it once in a session and you are healed forever. This one pill cure or theory of everything does not work even for psychotherapeutic practices. It requires a continuous work. One surely gets better at it over time, and there is indeed a moment of breakthrough where one comes out of the other side. But on the path to Self-Realisation, when the work seems done, one is often barely reached half-way, or one may barely have begun.

8) Shadow Work will fix me. This again is only partially true. Though there is a need to integrate the fragmented unconscious sub-personalities and other demented auto-suggestions and other more devious motivations and addictive tendencies, etc, lol, but there is no fixing you. It is an unintegrated shadow which compares itself to what it considers as fixed and then seeks to fix itself and match it to these standards. You must meet yourself with love at every stage.

9) The Shadow cannot be seen by me and requires "an evolved soul". Master Eckhart Tolle calls the shadow self as the pain body. Whenever you are in pain and discomfort, you are in your shadow self. It is that simple to see a shadow, though, we have discussed the intricacies in a previous section.



10) You can get done with Shadow Work, it is another task in your things-to-do list. You cannot rush your healing. Shadow Work especially is a journey - patience, simplicity, and compassion are indeed beautifully compatible with this journey. It takes time and trickles down and colours all the other areas of your life.

11) Shadow Work is cool. No it is not. It is not cool and fun, it can be challenging and can require one to change one's residence, country, job, relationships, etc. It involved grieving, contemplation, rejoicing, studying, meditating, changing habits, talking to those who traumatised you and those you traumatised, and seeing everything more clearly - the pains and the pleasures.

12) Shadow Work is a new-age spiritual fad. It is not only ancient in origins but a lot of the Shadow Work practices and tools used in the modern world by modern day psychologists are actually primitive and ancient in origins. It is only articulated and accepted within the modern world in the last decade or so.

Please add to the list of misconceptions as you do the Shadow Work, and feel free to share with me and discuss.

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND SHADOW WORK

Can I not simply focus on the positive sides of my self and override the negative? Why do I need to see the dark nature or the repressed contents of the psyche to become integrated and whole and conscious? This work sounds painful and arduous, and I feel I am better off simply living the way I live.

The most common misconception in the psychotherapy community is that if I focus on the positive aspects of my self, I will be able to override any trauma, hidden fears, desires, and other emotional imbalances, or deeper demons. Positivity trumps negativity.

As Teal Swan says, "Positive focus works, end of story. But there is one major caveat to this rule, there is one major exception. Positive focus works on everything except for the things that you are trying to use positive focus to avoid."

She further explains, "There is enormous difference between focusing on something positive for the sake of focusing positive, and focusing on something positive for the sake of

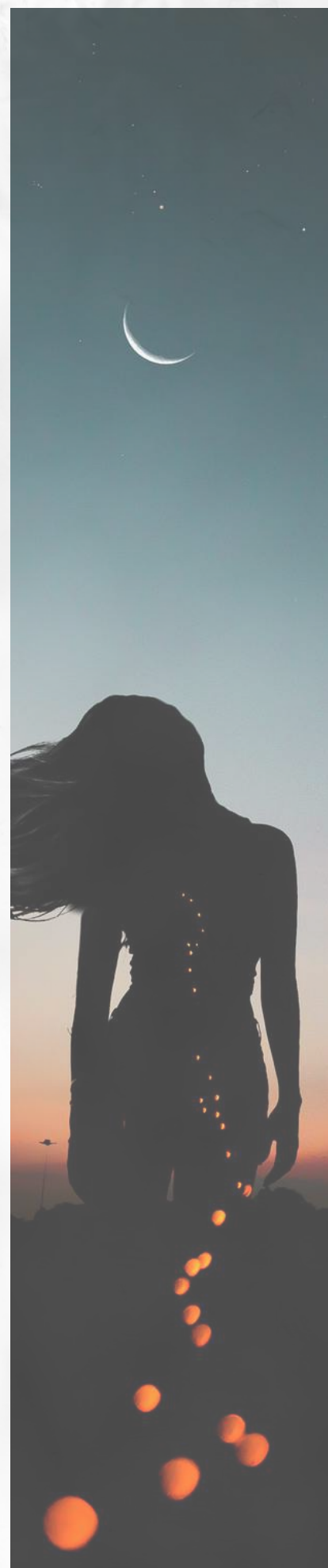


trying to escape from, ignore, or get away from something negative. When we are resistant to the idea of shadow work, we are trying to avoid something. When you realize that you are using positive focus to avoid something that feels negative to you, it is time to release resistance to whatever you are trying to avoid."

Positive focus can feel like a great way to evolve and develop without having to deal with the pains of the past. But a lot of the contents you are focusing on positively is rooted in the avoidance/compensation of the repressed contents of the unconscious.

One is often surprised to have dramatic and painful love relationships while they are doing "everything right" in their lives - they meditate, exercise, eat clean, work towards financial freedom, travel, and have great friends. But somehow, the love relationships always fail. This is because the repressed contents for that person has to directly do with the love-relationship aspect of the Self. So, dealing with that wound from childhood will directly heal the quality of love relationships.

This is why Positive Focus is not a substitute for Shadow Work.



SHADOW WORK AND VEDIC ASTROLOGY

The word 'Jyotisha' comes from the word "Jyoti", which means 'Light', and the whole point and purpose of light is to illuminate. But what is it that Jyotisha seeks to illuminate and make us conscious of, our psychophysical patterns? Our innate proclivities? Our Samskāras and Vāsanās? Yes! Indeed! But essentially, it is Shadow Work that Jyotisha must do. The highest effort of Jyotisha is to integrate all the fragmented and repressed autonomous aspects of oneself.

What is even more interesting is that, Jyotisha, unlike any other system of astrology, has given special importance to Rahu and Ketu, the shadow grahas - which are fundamental to Shadow Work when done through Vedic Astrology. Astronomically, Rahu and Ketu are formed due to the conjunction of the Ecliptic Plane of the Sun with the Orbital Plane of the Moon, that is, the Self and the self, the Soul and the Ego.

This is unknown in the Shadow Work as well as Jyotisha communities. It is a revelation of great import.

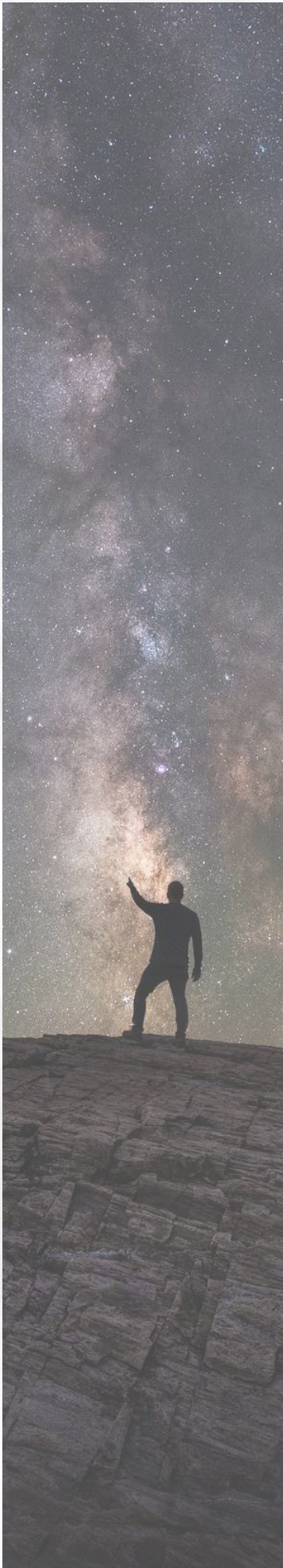




Vedic Astrology is the most sophisticated tool to do shadow work, and I have come to this realization that all of spiritual and psychological and physiological effort begins with the integration of the rejected parts of ourselves, as discussed so far, but it is the metaphysical aspects of reality which are usually simple intellectual excesses and spiritual imprudence of most practice, which is overcome through Jyotisha. Jyotisha makes these matters more personal, practicable, and rooted in the spiritual truths of reality.

What is one great significance is that, Carl G. Jung clearly understood this, and was an astrologer at heart before anything else. He conducted various astrological experiments and much of his psychoanalytic practice involved seeing the birth charts of his clients. He even deeply studied relationship compatibility and did a statistical analysis of 300 horoscopes.

Ketu is the shadows of the past, and Rahu is the projections and possessions into the future. This is the great karmic destiny that every being must fulfil. The conscious co-worker of the creator fulfils this process consciously, and the others unconsciously in a state of craving, longing, and victimisation (or some form of bondage).



In Jyotisha, we have a principle known as "Maturation of the Grahas", which states that, every graha has a maturation age where the karmic imprints associated with that graha fructify. Now, this maturation happens unconsciously for most people, including most astrologers, as this principle is often overlooked. But what is even more interesting to us is that, Rahu's maturation age is 42 years and Ketu's maturation age is 48 years, and it is this during this time, that the mid-life crisis occurs in most cultures, and one realises the repressed and rejected parts of themselves. The undertones and the unsaid truths are revealed within relationships, work, and one's own body

As stated before, it must be re-affirmed that Vedic Astrology brings a more metaphysical and psychospiritual aspect into Shadow Work, and makes it practicable. It can aid in avoiding spiritual imprudence.

The shadows of the past lives is a matter that must be dealt with care and prudence. It is something that I stay away from, but it can be deeply rewarding to engage in past life regression if one can - but if one has not been able to deal with the past and the present of this life, then memories of the previous existences may cause more harm than good.

SHADOW WORK AND DEPRESSION

Shadow Work can indeed feel like a depressive space which is completely different than clinical depression.

There can be periods of depression as one goes through the process of purging oneself of its contents as the ego fights and resists detaching itself from its self-destructive patterns.

Though not much is shared in the psychological community about shadow work and its relationship with depression, but I believe that much of what we call depression are due to unresolved shadows.

What we know as depression is one of the symptoms of repression.

As Teal Swan speaks, "People who have dedicated some form of their spiritual practice to shadow work can tell you from experience, that the more you do shadow work the less the less there is do, because more aspects of your unconscious mind have become integrated. But there is an exception to this rule.

There is a reason why some people feel as if the truth is the exact opposite. It is because they have entered what I like to call a Catharsis or a Healing Crisis.



"If you in your childhood especially, were deemed as unacceptable, a great many parts of you have been delegated to the subconscious mind, you have rejected more of yourself than other people, because of that, your closet, I should say, the skeletons in your closet are breaking your closet open at the seams, so when you begin to do shadow work, it will seem as if you have opened Pandora's box. You will get inundated by a flood. It is going to feel a bit like an emotional or an energetic flu, but on an emotional level, it is going to feel the same way that you feel when you have an actual flu, like your head's hanging over the toilet and you just cannot stop throwing up. It is easy and tempting to think that your life has gotten worse since you started shadow work but this is a healing crisis, it is a purge and ironically this is the point that most people stop shadow work and turn back in the direction from where they came, when it is actually the time that they are passing through the eye of the needle. and if they would keep going instead of turn back, they will integrate if not attain an enlightenment experience. They will experience freedom and wholeness and peace for the very first time. Why is it important to turn around and face your fears? Because if you turn around and face your fears they no longer hold power over you."



And finally, she add, "You are no longer resisting the unwanted by running away from it. Instead you are shifting into a state of allowing by accepting it and by doing that, it cannot hurt you or haunt you anymore. Like a ghost, your shadow will follow and haunt you to the ends of the earth begging for the light of consciousness to be focused towards it. And focus on your shadow does not create more shadow, because shadow that is exposed to the light of consciousness ceases to be shadow."

"We can see how a neglected persona works, and what one must do to remedy the evil. Such people can avoid disappointments and an infinity of sufferings, scenes, and social catastrophes only by learning to see how people behave in the world. They must learn to understand what society expects of them; they must realize that there are factors and persons in the world far above them; they must know that what they do has a meaning for others."

- Carl G. Jung



REMEMBER

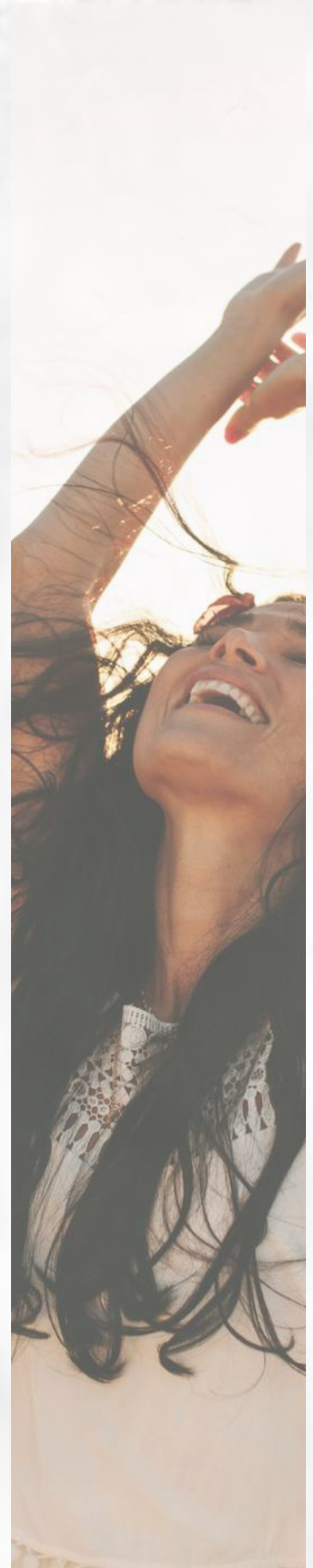
As Carl G. Jung writes in Aion, "Everyone carries a shadow, and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is. At all counts, it forms an unconscious snag, thwarting our most well-meant intentions."

As you dig deeper into the matters of the unconscious, what was once dark, mysterious, and subtle begins to become light, positive, and obvious.

The shadow in and of itself is formed because it is perceived as something dangerous, unacceptable, something that is bad, and must not be shown to the world or oneself, otherwise it will wreck havoc.

While our unsophisticated child self could not deal with these contents, we are now much more capable and well-equipped for dealing with them.

Much of the psychological work if done properly eventually leads one to the gates of spirituality - that is, something beyond the mind and intellectual understanding. It is a felt and in some cases a seen reality.



As you continue to integrated the subconscious tendencies there is less and lesser contents within and it gets easier over time. A state of being-ness and joy arises. Though this is only the beginning of the true spiritual journey into the more beautiful realities and possibilities that the soul within the human body beholds.

To live an integrated life means to live a life of courage, love, surrender, creativity, endurance, balance, acceptance, reason, meaning, purpose, contentment, knowing-ness, intuition, intellect, heart, spirit, wisdom, flow.

To live a fragmented life is to live a life that is angry, lustful, resentful, hateful, ashamed, guilty, purposeless, meaningless, instinctual, fooldom, control, power, fear, addictions.

To be integrated is to be whole.

To be unconscious is to be fragmented.

What you resist persists.

What you repress, is unconsciously expressed.

The Self, that is, the totality of everything known and unknown, that is, the Atman, beholds within itself all psycho-spiritual phenomenon, including, ego, shadows, archetypes, superego, etc.



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Disclaimer: This article is not meant to be used for personal medical or psychological diagnosis/treatment. If you or somebody know has experienced any symptoms of depression, please contact your primary care physician or a therapist for consultation, treatment or further guidance.

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