



*Syracuse Integrative Psychiatry*

Comprehensive care. Transformative outcomes.

DEPRESSION DEEP DIVE SERIES: PART 9 OF 12

# Dialogue with the Symptom

## Part 9: Active Imagination & Personifying Depression

**Welcome to Part 9: Dialogue with the Symptom.**

Jung developed a technique called Active Imagination—a way of dreaming with your eyes open. Instead of talking about your depression, you talk to it. By personifying the symptom, we separate from it and can enter into a relationship with it.

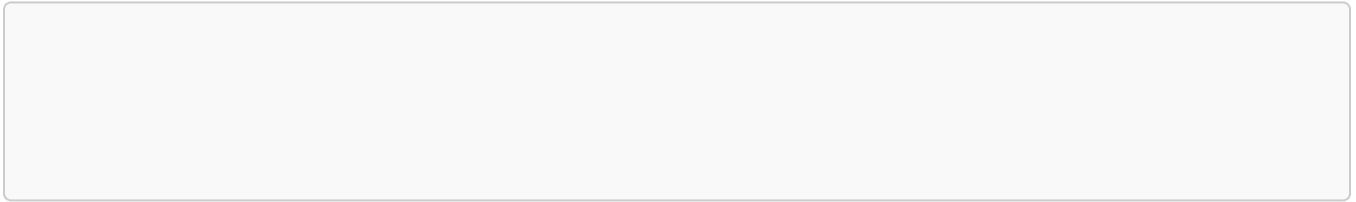
"That which we do not bring to consciousness appears in our lives as fate." — Carl Jung

# 1. Personifying the Depression

If your depression were a person, an animal, or a creature, what would it look like? Is it a heavy gray blob? A weeping old woman? A dark cloud? Giving it a form helps you see it as something separate from "you."

## Reflection:

Close your eyes and let an image of your depression form. Describe it in detail. (Size, color, texture, expression). Does it have a name?

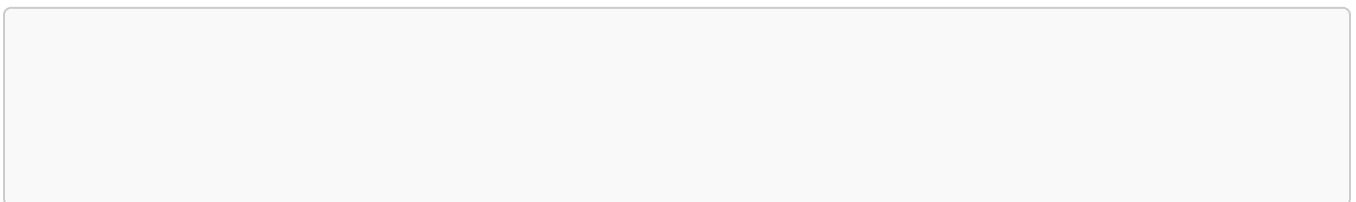


# 2. The Interview

Now, imagine sitting across from this figure. Ask it questions respectfully. It is not an enemy; it is a messenger. Ask: "Who are you?" "What do you want from me?" "What are you trying to show me?"

## Reflection:

Write out the dialogue script. Trust the first answers that pop into your head, even if they seem strange. Let the figure speak for itself.



### 3. Negotiating a Truce

Often, the symptom will tell you exactly what it needs to leave. Maybe it needs you to quit a job, or to grieve a loss, or to paint. Once you hear the message, you can negotiate.

#### Reflection:

What did the figure ask for? Is there a way you can honor that request in your real life? If you agree to listen, will it agree to lift the weight a little?

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