



Syracuse Integrative Psychiatry

Comprehensive care. Transformative outcomes.

DEPRESSION DEEP DIVE SERIES: PART 12 OF 12

Individuation & Meaning

Part 12: Birthing the True Self & Wholeness

Welcome to Part 12: Individuation & Meaning.

We end our series with the concept of Individuation—the lifelong process of becoming your whole, unique self. Jung believed the goal of life was not happiness, but wholeness. Depression, painful as it is, can be the labor pains of a new self trying to be born.

"I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become." — C.G. Jung

1. The Teleological View

Instead of asking "What caused this?" (looking back), Jung asked "What is this for?" (looking forward). He believed symptoms have a purpose. They are trying to correct an imbalance.

Reflection:

Imagine your depression is a wise, ancient teacher who has come to correct your path. What is the lesson? (e.g., "You must stop living for your father's approval," "You must reconnect with your creativity").

2. Mourning the Unlived Life

To move forward, we must grieve. We must grieve the ideal life we didn't have, the parents we didn't get, and the time we lost. But we must also grieve the "unlived life"—the potential we abandoned.

Reflection:

What part of your "unlived life" is calling to you? Is there a creative urge, a desire for connection, or a spiritual hunger that you have starved?

3. Integration and Wholeness

Recovery is not about going back to "who you were before." You can't go back. You have been changed by the descent. Recovery is about integration—bringing the wisdom of the darkness up into the light.

Reflection:

You have survived the Night Sea Journey. What is one piece of "treasure" (insight, strength, or truth) you have found in the darkness that you want to keep as you move toward the light?

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