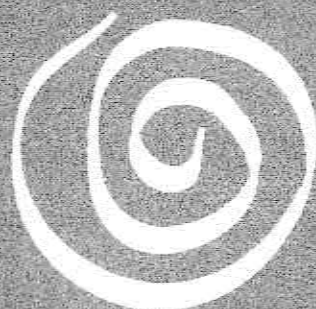




The Art of Inquiry

A Depth Psychological Perspective



Second, revised edition

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PHILOSOPHICAL COMMITMENTS OF DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY

This central principle of the history of ideas — that all ideas are partial — is perhaps the most important single fact that the human intellect has yet discovered . . . [and] the foundation of wisdom: the mind must be modest. Even if it does not, and probably cannot, know its own limitations, it can be aware that they exist. Does this principle seem obvious? Alas, it is not. One of the dangers of our age, more damaging than ever before, is *total obsession with partial ideas*.²²

Postmodern critical thought and depth psychology agree on one important and enduring epistemological idea. One's approach to a subject affects what can be seen and learned. At the simplest level the idea is based on the fact of physical existence. Human beings, as embodied flesh-and-blood creatures, can only see something in one way at one time, which means that from moment to moment people operate from *within* a given perspective. The simple expression "now we will turn our attention to . . ." captures this truth. To pay attention to something requires turning towards it — either physically, mentally, or both. And this necessarily means turning away from something else. For this reason, an inquiring person tries always to remember that knowledge, indeed consciousness itself, is always only partial. As much as one might like to be omniscient, it is just not possible. One can reach towards whole knowledge by adopting different perspectives on an issue or question, then use memory, imagination and compassion to weave them into a more comprehensive understanding — and the whole will remain just beyond grasp. But that is no argument against reaching. We believe that it is this gap between reach and grasp that stimulates human creativity, fosters enchantment with the yet-to-be known, and inspires the art of inquiry.

We'll have more to say about the relationship of the part to the whole later in the chapter, but for now we want to assert something important about the partial nature of knowledge and consciousness. We are fully in agreement with L. L. Whyte, who pointed out the very real danger of "total obsession with partial ideas." This obsession is not only an act of hubris; it is profoundly unpsychological.

Twenty-five hundred years ago the Greek philosopher Heraclitus redefined the soul as the dynamic motivating force behind human action and thought, both fathomless and fiery. In Philip Wheelright's commentary on Fragment 45, *The soul has its own principle of growth*, he says this:

A soul, during the span of time in which it is alive, possesses a real though limited autonomy. In this connection Fr. 45 is significant; for to say that a soul has its own principle of growth is to say that it must be understood not as being pushed into activity from without, but as bestirring itself from within — like a fire rekindling itself from a tiny spark.²³

A few thousand years later, Freud founded his work on the dynamic nature of the psyche. To be psychological, one adopts the psyche's method and lets perspectives and ideas move freely instead of attempting to make them into outsized, rigid monuments that obliterate other truths. People can begin this practice by becoming aware of their own perspective — or to put it in different language, by understanding the myth they already are living. This is a powerful bit of knowledge that may take months if not years to explore. In the process, people become aware of which sorts of things get their attention and which are overlooked; it reveals how they think and feel about the phenomena that do attract their attention, such as "this is trivial" or "that is unimportant;" finally it suggests the posture of attention they adopt. We have described the two basic postures as the *yin* and *yang* of inquiry. The *yin* of inquiry is patient receptivity while the *yang* of inquiry is an assertive, focused pursuit. These two general postures can be further elaborated to articulate a host of styles. For example the inquiring person can be inclusive, discriminating, precise, penetrating, intimate, distant, hot, cool, insatiable, selective, malleable, reserved, categorical, or impressionable, and each style yields different knowledge

and insight; or perhaps they yield knowledge and insight differently. *How* one sees affects *what* one sees.

In guiding readers in the art of inquiry, we want to acknowledge the myth we are living and declare our perspective. Why is this important? Our choice of perspective has affected what we have studied and seen, the methods and moves we have adopted, and the outcome of this work. *The Art of Inquiry* exemplifies the direct and lively relationship between how a person proceeds and what is produced. We believe, and hope to show, that the tradition of depth psychology is uniquely engaging, playful, and inspiring because it is, fundamentally, a philosophy of inquiry. For this reason, what follows is a philosophical exploration of the depth psychological perspective that articulates the commitments it implies. The chapter includes some hints about how best to employ these commitments in work and in life. Simply put, we want readers to know what they are getting into.

Depth psychology is a vast and complex field with a rich history of interconnecting ideas. Attempting to boil these ideas down to a laundry list of core philosophical commitments is a terrific way to spark a fierce and lively debate. That's fine. In fact, engaging in the debate to clarify these ideas is essential. Each person needs to test them through an engagement with his or her feeling function, the deliberate and discriminating process by which someone knows their deepest values. Without their own ideas, people too easily become victims of someone else's epistemology and remain estranged from their own. Without an adequate epistemology, people cannot engage in authentic psychological inquiry because they won't know how to learn. Without a good and useful idea of how to learn, they will not be capable of enlisting the attention, support, and wisdom of an indefatigable teacher, the psyche. To paraphrase an ancient adage, the student must be ready for the teacher to appear.

In the spirit of Hermes, that mercurial power who loves the fiery exchange of words, and his orderly brother Apollo, who is rather fond of laundry lists, herewith are eight philosophical commitments of depth psychology that are critical to the art of inquiry:

- The psyche is real
- The psyche is a perspective
- The psyche is both personal and more than personal
- The psyche is fluid and protean
- The psyche is symptomatic
- The psyche is multiple and relational
- The psyche is complex and contradictory
- The psyche is dialectical

As we describe each of these commitments in detail, we invite you to take the ideas psychologically. That is, please read, absorb, engage, reflect, challenge, feel, imagine, think, and critique. Then use the ideas to think of yourself as a soul embarking on the odyssey of psychological inquiry, in lively dialogue with the psyche.

COMMITMENT I: THE PSYCHE IS REAL

All depth psychologists believe in the reality of the unconscious and take the whole psyche, which includes both consciousness and the unconscious, as their primary datum. This distinguishes *depth* psychology from other approaches such as cognitive, behavioral, experimental, and social psychology. For instance, three prominent authors and social psychologists, Howard Gardner, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and William Damon, published a book entitled *Good Work* in which they define themselves as "social scientists of the mind." This is a fine description of a particular style of psychology. In fact, it alludes to the kind of psychology familiar to most people, one that pays attention to human beliefs and behavior in a social context. A depth psychologist might begin examining a person's belief or behavior, but only as a trapdoor into the more remote recesses of the individual psyche and to the wealth of connections between the individual soul and other souls which situate and nourish it. Depth psychology, as its name implies, draws one beneath the surfaces of thought, word, and action to the inclinations and impulses of the soul they are rooted in.

The first generation of depth psychologists, Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), Alfred Adler (1870–1937), and C. G. Jung (1875–1961), focused on the unconscious but did not discover it. For example, ancient Greeks believed in the healing power of dreams and wondered about their mysterious source, as do members of other indigenous cultures around the world from Africa to Australia to the Americas. Just prior to Freud, European philosophers and artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries looked to the unconscious as the ground of individuality and the source of poetic inspiration. In perhaps the most dramatic instance, Samuel Taylor Coleridge reportedly dreamt the entire text of his poem *Kubla Kahn* and, upon awakening, wrote most of it down. Freud's pioneering contribution to human knowledge of the unconscious lay in using the emerging tools of scientific analysis to observe mental processes and develop a systematic theory of the structure and dynamics of the psyche. Freud maintained that no thought, feeling, inspiration, memory, or action occurred randomly. Only a theory of an unconscious as a counterpart to ego consciousness could explain the meaning and purpose of supposedly irrational behavior. Freud's work was startling, provocative, and beautifully articulated, and he made the language of depth psychology part of everyday lexicon. Today, many people who have never read a word of Freud's work in translation freely use terms such as *ego*, *id*, *superego*, *repression*, *libido*, and the *unconscious*.

Freud's followers, particularly Jung and Adler, had significant and acrimonious theoretical disagreements with Freud. Ultimately each man founded his own school of thought that attracted its particular set of philosophical adherents and professional analysts. Though these three "fathers of depth psychology" developed different ways of perceiving and working with the unconscious, a heretofore neglected aspect of the psyche, they nonetheless agreed that it was the primary object of their interest and research. Not one of them doubted that the psyche was real. In other words, at a time when positivism had established its intellectual hegemony throughout the Western world, Freud, Adler, and Jung withstood the scorn and contempt of their more conventional peers to explore the unconscious. They could not probe the unconscious directly in the same way they would conduct a physical examination. But it could

be detected through its effect, and this they proceeded to study with all the rigor of any determined scientist.

As an aside, the exploration of the unconscious was coterminous with another similar development in the physical sciences. In the first part of the twentieth century, Albert Einstein began to search for a theory that would integrate all known discoveries about the physical world. He was virtually alone at the time, but within fifty years many more physicists, though not all, would embrace Einstein's vision. Seeking one neat "theory of everything" has been described as the Holy Grail of physics, a suggestive metaphor that hints at the passionate and mysterious nature of this quest. In physics, a field refers to an area under the influence of an invisible force that is known through its visible effect on the phenomenal world. Gravitational (electromagnetic) fields exemplify this. An invisible field that produces visible effects is a cogent description of the unconscious, the evidence for which also is inferential. Depth psychologists infer the existence of the invisible unconscious by seeing its visible effect in dreams, in symptoms, and in psychopathology. The simultaneous investigations for a unified field theory in physics and for a personal and transpersonal unconscious in depth psychology are an interesting bit of synchronicity. Jung observed that the conjunction of these two lines of inquiry in two separate human disciplines is suggestive. Though their relationship to one another is "extremely hypothetical" it is nonetheless worth entertaining. "Sooner or later," Jung said, "nuclear physics and the psychology of the unconscious will draw closer together as both of them, independently of one another and from opposite directions . . . push forward into transcendental territory."²⁴

Freud fully understood the difficult task of making psychoanalysis a legitimate area of medical research and a science in its own right. In a paper on the unconscious that he published at the end of 1915, he replied to critics that "our assumption of the unconscious is necessary and legitimate, and that we possess numerous proofs of its existence."²⁵ These proofs included the substantial gaps in conscious mental functioning of healthy people such as slips of the tongue, (now known colloquially as "Freudian slips"), behavioral anomalies, and dreams.

Inferring the existence of the unconscious utilized a valid scientific principle, induction, which means to arrive at a generalized conclusion

(or theory) based on observation of particular instances. Freud took great pains to defend his right as a scientist to develop a theory of the unconscious in this way. Since theoretical constructs are the means by which any science advances itself, why should psychoanalysis as the scientific exploration of the unconscious be any different? Freud argued that the method of psychoanalytical research was identical with other research sciences. It begins with "describing phenomena" and then proceeds "to group, classify, and correlate them." Like other sciences, the phenomena under psychoanalytic scrutiny suggested the application of "certain abstract ideas to the material in hand, ideas derived from somewhere or other but certainly not from the new observations alone. Such ideas — which later become the basic concepts of the science — are still more indispensable as the material is further worked over." Moreover, psychoanalytical ideas are continually justified by "having significant relations to the empirical material."²⁶ The unconscious was just such an idea.

Freud's arguments are stylistically brilliant and logically persuasive. Yet for all his considerable effort, depth psychologists since Freud have felt the need to take up the same gauntlet. Positivism, the belief in the validity *only* in what can be seen and measured, is alive and well 100 years after Freud. For example, in one of the most dramatic moments in the Houston interviews with C. G. Jung filmed in the 1950s, he *insisted* that the psyche is real. Like Freud, this was the core tenet of Jung's approach to depth psychology. However, rather than speak of the unconscious as a scientifically valid theoretical construct, Jung more often alluded to it as a fundamental experience of the human condition. Jung tended to emphasize belief in the unconscious that was grounded in direct experience of psychic phenomena, something akin to a belief in god grounded in direct experience of the sacred. This gave Jung's philosophical position and his psychological method a very different flavor than that of Freudian psychoanalysis. It might loosely be called spiritual as opposed to Freud's emphasis on the scientific. However, this distinction must not be distorted through overemphasis. The two men had more in common than not. They were medical doctors who, by temperament and training, paid minute attention to the phenomena their patients presented in the clinical setting.

Freud looked for the origin of current illness in the patient's past, emphasizing a retrospective look at life lived thus far. He stated that "analytic experience has convinced us of the complete truth of the assertion so often to be heard that the child is psychologically father to the adult and that the events of his first years are of paramount importance for his whole later life."²⁷ The period of childhood was key, Freud argued, because it is the short, intense period of time when the ego is molded by internal demands and external influences to produce a functioning member of society. "In the space of a few years the little primitive creature must turn into a civilized human being; he must pass through an immensely long stretch of human cultural development in an almost uncannily abbreviated form."²⁸ The prohibitions and punishments the child encountered inevitably led to wounding, which years later showed up in the suffering adults who came to Freud for psychoanalytic help. His aim was to alleviate this suffering and give the ego greater freedom and control.

Like Freud, Jung also wanted his patients to develop the ego strength needed to respond to life with more freedom. Jung's emphasis, however, was on developing the relational capacity of the ego. A strong ego is an ego capable of relating to the Self, the *imago dei* (image of God) which is the archetype of wholeness and contains the seeds of future life. In one of Jung's letters, he uses the metaphors of straw and stone to describe this kind of ego strength:

God wants to be born in the flame of man's consciousness, leaping ever higher. And what if this has no roots in the earth? If it is not a house of stone where the fire of God can dwell, but a wretched straw hut that flares up and vanishes? Could God then be born? One must be able to suffer God. That is the supreme task for the carrier of ideas. He must be the advocate of the earth.²⁹

Relationship with the Self is not for the sole benefit of the individual person. Rather it is the way that the psyche, which is more than personal, expresses *its* creativity and comes to know *itself*. "There is no other way in which [the psyche] could express itself except through the individual human being."³⁰ Only the substantial person, the true individual who is strong enough to suffer the Self without being overwhelmed, can become

a carrier of ideas and an advocate of the earth. This role demands ego stability, intellectual dedication, and psychological wisdom — a formidable combination of aptitudes.

Jung found that the unconscious offers ego consciousness insight into the past and also leads individuals and communities toward their future. It is continually producing images to assist patients with the essential task of becoming whole over the course of their lives. Though the person never achieves wholeness, it is possible to move toward it by responding thoughtfully and sensitively to the clues the psyche offers. Jung had few illusions about the challenges inherent in living with the reality of the whole psyche. There are many reasons for ignoring or forgetting the existence of the unconscious in particular. Much of the time the ego prefers to see itself as coterminous with the entire psyche rather than as one small part of it. Often, the contents of the unconscious that do rise to the surface of awareness are disturbing and confusing; unwelcome heralds of things most people would rather ignore. Living with the reality of the psyche, which requires attention to such unconscious stirrings, takes time and effort. But ignoring the unconscious in any given moment does not negate its reality or effects. As Andrew Stevens says, the unconscious "exists as a perpetual companion to consciousness; its utterances in words and symbolic images proceed ceaselessly below the threshold of everyday awareness."³¹ When one acknowledges the reality of the psyche, this perpetual companion of ego consciousness makes itself known. It is not simple, as we have said, but it does ensure that one's life and work will be deeply creative and full of meaning.

COMMITMENT 2: THE PSYCHE IS A PERSPECTIVE

In Jung's essay "Instincts and the unconscious," he put forward the idea that archetypes are "modes of apprehension."³² That is, they aren't simply manifestations of psyche, they are the way the person sees and understands. Anyone who has been caught in a complex — the tangible manifestation of an archetype — can readily understand this. Writers use colors and symbols to describe the experience, for instance, "she saw red" as a description of someone who is enraged. The emotion of rage symbolically *colors* everything that the enraged person sees. To speak in

archetypal terms, one might describe that person as possessed by Kali, the Hindu goddess of creativity and destruction, or refer to it as a visitation from Ares, the hotheaded Greek god of war.

James Hillman takes Jung's idea that archetypes are modes of apprehension and expands it. In the preface to his book *Revisioning Psychology*, Hillman describes the psyche (soul) as an archetype and, therefore, as a way of seeing. "By soul I mean . . . a perspective rather than a substance, a viewpoint toward things rather than a thing itself."³³ Later in the book he argues that soul is not a subject, a body of knowledge that one acquires, but the way one acquires knowledge about anything at all. Psyche is an epistemology: "The soul is less an object of knowledge than it is a way of knowing the object, a way of knowing knowledge itself."³⁴

Jung was not the first depth psychologist to view psychology as a field of knowledge and to use psychology as a critical perspective on other subjects, such as literature or art. Some of Freud's most memorable writings are his analyses of culture, religion, and history, in which he applies the principles of psychoanalysis and interprets the deep meaning of widely ranging subject matter for his readers. Freud's impact on culture was recently acknowledged in an exhibition of his works, selected from the Library of Congress's collection of more than 112 million diverse items. James H. Billington, the Librarian of Congress, stated that "while controversy still abounds in medical, literary, and academic circles over Sigmund Freud and his work . . . few would disagree that his chief legacy — the psychoanalytic movement — has had an enormous impact on Western culture in the twentieth century."³⁵ Freud's interpretations of culture are sometimes startling and always provocative. At the very least, works like *Totem and Taboo*, *Civilization and its Discontents*, and *The Future of an Illusion* substantiate the idea that the depth psychological perspective offers valuable insight not revealed by other ways of thinking and thus augments human understanding and knowledge.

In the spirit of Freud's wide-ranging application of psychoanalysis to culture, depth psychologists including Freudians and Jungians continued to move the new discipline inexorably beyond the bounds of clinical praxis. Over the course of the twentieth century, depth psychology became "a form of thought, an approach to human experience, that has

become constitutive of our culture and pervades the way we have come to experience ourselves and our minds."³⁶ One of Jung's many contributions was to describe psychology as an ontology, a way of being, and to lay the groundwork for the archetypes as ways of knowing. Hillman, in his development of archetypal psychology, expanded Jung's notion that psychology is an epistemology by naming psyche as an archetype, thereby claiming soul as a perspective. This perspective, he says, is reflective, deep, and metaphorical. It "makes differences between ourselves and everything that happens," which invites reflection.³⁷ Opening this gap between the self and the stuff of life permits one to learn about both self and world. The perspective of psyche, in other words, provides the opportunity to develop a richer, deeper, and more imaginative mind simply by paying attention. As Jung would say, people become distinct personalities by virtue of the fact that they enter into a psychological relationship with every aspect of life — and with life itself.

Hillman describes precisely what he means by the soul perspective. It is the deepening of events into experiences, it has a special relationship with death, and it refers to a symbolic or metaphorical approach to life. Let's discuss each of these in greater detail.³⁸

First, "soul refers to the deepening of events into experiences."³⁹ This is where attention is paramount. The soul perspective is an invitation to pause and attend, to go beneath the glittering, sometimes brittle surfaces of hectic life to allow a simple, fleeting event to take root. This metaphor suggests substance and slow growth and darkness and fertility. An experience matters. It is something that is felt at the deepest levels of being. The presence of feeling, arousal, and meaning — all indications that eros is stirring — is the hallmark of a soul experience. That is why an experience is always more psychological than a mere event.

Second, Hillman argues, the soul perspective which transforms a fleeting event into a significant experience derives from the soul's "special relation with death."⁴⁰ This relationship between the soul and death has a long history. "Greek poetic tradition from Homer through Plato conceived of the psyche primarily in terms of death, that is, in relation with the underworld or the afterlife." Death, in this case, is more symbolic than literal. It refers to "the point of view 'beyond' and 'below' life's

concerns."⁴¹ In its kinship with death, the perspective of psyche pulls the person below the surface into the depths to look at things another way. This pull towards death is a specific antidote for the hectic pace of modern life that celebrates endless consumption of things, people and events. The perspective of psyche exposes the cherished illusion "that growth is but an additive process requiring neither sacrifice nor death. The soul favors the death experience to usher in change."⁴²

Finally, Hillman says that the soul perspective refers to "the imaginative possibilities in our natures, the experiencing through reflective speculation, dream, image, and fantasy — that mode, which recognizes all realities as primarily symbolic or metaphorical."⁴³ When people pause to speculate on the meaning of a particular event, they see *beyond* its simple presentation to acknowledge that there is more here than meets the eye. They open up to the richness of the psyche and multiply possibilities rather than close down and limit possibilities. In other words, adopting the soul perspective trains people to imagine the invisible whole, the matrix or field that contains the visible part. David Abram, who writes as a magician and a phenomenologist, says that the imagination

is from the first an attribute of the senses themselves; imagination is not a separate mental faculty (as we so often assume) but is rather the way the senses themselves have of throwing themselves beyond what is immediately given, in order to make tentative contact with the other sides of things that we do not sense directly, with the hidden or invisible aspects of the sensible. And yet such sensory anticipations and projections are not arbitrary; they regularly respond to suggestions offered by the sensible itself.⁴⁴

Abram places provocative emphasis on the responsive nature of imagination. He redefines imagination as intense participation with the sensible world instead of disengagement from it.⁴⁵ Psychologizing is *seeing through* a phenomenon to what is behind, beneath, or on the other side of it. In the following passage, Hillman describes it as a style of attention that requires participation, curiosity, and above all flexibility.

Changes of physical position and attitude can be metaphors for seeing through. To psychologize we need to get closer or even to "backoff" for a different perspective or to look at things from a different angle. Other motifs are: turning lights on or off, entering, descending, climbing up or fleeing to gain distance, translating, reading or speaking another tongue, eyes and optical instruments, being in another land or another period of history, becoming insane or sick or drunk — all of which are concrete images for shifting one's attitude to events, scenes, persons.⁴⁶

The flexibility needed to shift perspective points the way towards the one thing that kills psychological inquiry: rigidity. People need to remain alert to any hints of dogmatism in their attitude without sacrificing the dedication and discipline necessary to the quest for knowledge. The specific motifs Hillman mentions — entering, descending, climbing up or fleeing to gain distance — are *not* just bodily metaphors for intellectual moves. The flexibility of perspective required in psychological inquiry often is a matter of actual physical movement.

As Robert Romanyshyn explains, "the most ordinary but also the most primary fact about a person and his or her body is that the person *is* his or her body," which means every human action, from pace to posture to gesture, is indicative of one's character, history, and desire.⁴⁷ There exists an intimate connection between fleshy body and fluid perspective. Learning is rooted in lived experience, even when its full consummation urges the person toward the heights and breadth of intellectual understanding. People know what they know through sensation, intuition and imagination working in concert with reason.

One obligation that arises in adopting psyche as a perspective is continual self-awareness, which might include asking some of the following questions: "What is my attitude now, open, receptive, stubborn, dogmatic?" "Am I trying to be right or am I willing to be surprised or challenged?" Other questions are "What am I not seeing?" and "Who am I not hearing?" Such self-awareness, though relatively simple, is nonetheless demanding. Another obligation is to view any sort of inquiry as a dialogue between the worker and everything seeking participation in the

work. The question is what kind of dialogue and with whom? According to convention, dialogue is conversation with other human beings. This limits dialogue to a human enterprise and alienates humanity from the rest of the animated world and the *anima mundi*. For people who adopt psychic as a perspective, dialogue can and does include the figures who show up in dreams, fantasies, and artwork as well as the natural and man-made things of the world. They are considered psychically real and their presence is assumed to be meaningful rather than random or accidental. The perspective of psyche fosters a particularly rich way of relating to the world. The person who thrives is someone who is willing to be informed, holding the posture of a continual apprentice to life and all that it has to teach.

COMMITMENT 3: THE PSYCHE IS PERSONAL AND MORE THAN PERSONAL

One of the most significant of Freud's many contributions to depth psychology was his decision to take his patient's symptoms seriously even in the absence of a physiological cause. Rather than dismiss these individuals as "mere hysterics," Freud sought another explanation for their symptoms. He moved beyond a strict consideration of the biological origin (etiology) of the neuroses and began to address what is known in eastern wisdom traditions as the subtle body. In other words, Freud recognized that human beings were bodies *and* souls and that either one of them or both could be wounded. For Freud, the psyche was bounded by and contained within *human* bodies and never found elsewhere. To address soul issues, Freud treated individuals and their personal history, and did not venture far beyond the family of origin.

The emphasis on curing patients is a significant feature of Freudian psychology and many other traditional forms of clinical work. The therapist in partnership with the patient attempts to detect and solve psychological problems; in other words to effect, with some partial measure of success, a cure. Freud was very modest in his goal. He hoped only to transform neurotic misery into common unhappiness. He asserted that at this stage in human history no more is possible because no one can

entirely escape the modern neurotic condition. Neurosis, Freud argued in *Civilization and its Discontents*, is a byproduct of the civilizing process. Social existence per se — and human beings can only live socially — is both frustrating and fulfilling for individuals.

In his *Outline of Psycho-Analysis* Freud succinctly described the goal and the process of psychoanalytic treatment:

The analytic physician and the patient's weakened ego, basing themselves on the real external world, have to band themselves together into a party against the enemies, the instinctual demands of the id and the conscientious demands of the super-ego. We form a pact with each other. . . . Our knowledge is to make up for his ignorance and to give his ego back its mastery over lost provinces of his mental life. This pact constitutes the analytic situation.⁴⁸

The Freudian approach envisions the individual psyche as an unrelenting battleground of contending forces. In Freud's 1923 essay *The Ego and the Id*, which is considered the definitive articulation of his mature theory, Freud uses several metaphors to suggest this. One of the ego's most important jobs is to try to defend against the murderous tendencies of the id and the reproaches of the superego, to find some way to satisfy their conflicting desires and, at the same time, mediate between these internal demands and external reality. It is a never-ending task requiring the diplomacy of a statesman and the perseverance of Sisyphus. The analyst is the ego's only ally, and analysis is effective in part because the analyst never underestimates the relentlessly unstable state of affairs.

Three key assumptions are embedded in this psychoanalytic model. The first assumption is that the psyche to be addressed is an individual one (though the psyche does come into being dialectically in relationship to primary others). Second, the individual psyche suffers from its own divisions and longs for healing. Third, the beneficiary of the attention is the individual person, which has tended to mean the individual ego and not the soul. The central challenge in ego-oriented psychotherapy is, "How can we (analyst and patient) get rid of this symptom (i.e., this manifestation of the psyche) so that I (the patient) feel better?" As Hillman points

out, such an attitude insists that "all my subjectivity and all my interiority must literally be mine, in ownership of my conscious ego-personality. At best we have souls; but no one says we are souls." In fact, "conventional psychology rarely even uses the word soul: a person is referred to as a self or an ego."⁴⁹ Particularly from the perspective of ego psychology, which is the broadest therapeutic tradition in America to grow directly out of psychoanalysis, concern for the soul is nearly absent.⁵⁰

Jung agreed with Freud on the extensive influence of the unconscious. Patients' ideas or imaginations of themselves are just as real as the breathing, moving, thinking, and feeling person that physically exists. Moreover, the consequences are just as real. An injured idea of the self can be as limiting as an injured limb. It is just at this point, however, that Jung made a radical departure from Freud. He found evidence for a transpersonal and suprahuman psyche in addition to the individual psyche. In his early work, Jung called this the collective unconscious. Later, in his 1934 essay *The Development of the Personality*, Jung began referring to this transpersonal, collective unconscious as the *objective psyche*.

To describe the boundless and containing quality of the objective psyche, Jung borrowed the Latin phrase *unus mundus*, which literally translates to "one world." He stated that "Psyche and matter exist in one and the same world, and each partakes of the other.... Synchronistic [events] point to a profound harmony between all forms of existence."⁵¹ For Jung, the phrase "all forms of existence" includes what is conventionally considered to be real — *matter* that one can touch, see, taste, smell, hear and above all measure — and also what is conventionally considered imaginary or a fantasy, which includes *nonmaterial* images, sensations, and intuitions. A thorough and meaningful approach to the psyche needs to address what is and what is not bounded by the individual human body.

Jung believed that all forms of life have a telos, which is the urge to become a distinct and complete individual. This is the creative drive, which he called *individuation*. As human beings individuate, consciousness of the self increases simultaneously with consciousness of what is not self. The process of differentiating self from other fosters genuine relationship; without differentiation no relationship is possible. Individuation requires a lifelong relationship with the unconscious that begins with attention to the personal psyche but does not end there. Eventually it

includes adopting a receptive attitude to everything, which produces a refined awareness of the individual self as a psychic being in relationship with the more-than-personal psyche. In part because the world is a plenitude of phenomena, the process of individuation inevitably "leads to more intense and broader collective relationships and not to isolation."⁵² The individuating person expands outward, actively relating to the more-than-personal psyche rather than contracting into narrow self-absorbed preoccupation with the personal psyche. Hillman sums it up nicely: "The self-knowledge that depth psychology offers is not enough if the depths of the world soul are neglected. A self-knowledge that rests within a cosmology which declares the mineral, vegetable, and animal world beyond the human person to be impersonal and inanimate is not only inadequate. It is also delusional."⁵³

For people deeply engaged in the art of inquiry, Jung's more inclusive definition of the psyche is fruitful. Among other things, it suggests that any work a person undertakes has as much psychic reality as the worker. It is an active, autonomous participant in its own development, with legitimate demands and desires, on the path of its own individuation. Though one may wish to control the creative process, it is only possible to guide its course. A more psychological approach is to treat the work as an autonomous partner by entering into a lively, dialectical relationship with it, fully prepared for the unexpected and the synchronistic. In the realm of the psyche, all authors are co-authors.

Perhaps a helpful way to view the art of inquiry is to use the metaphor of a journey. One is engaged in an odyssey, poised between the worlds of death and life, and implicated in their rich fusion. Mythologist and cultural anthropologist Karl Kerényi offers a beautiful description of what this feels like in the midst of the experience.

The situation of the journeyer is defined by movement, fluctuation . . . The journeyer is at home while underway, at home on the road itself, the road being understood not as a connection between two definite points on the earth's surface, but as a particular world . . . Being open to everywhere is part of [the road's] nature. Nevertheless, they form a world in its own right, a middle domain, where a person has access to everything. He who moves about familiarly in this world-of-the-road has Hermes for his God.⁵⁴

It is no coincidence that the god of journeys is Hermes, the archetypal communicator and guide of souls. What livelier companion could there be on such an odyssey?

COMMITMENT 4: THE PSYCHE IS FLUID AND PROTEAN

Freud had one primary concern as he developed psychoanalysis into a science and a therapeutic practice: to pay close attention to the fluctuating contents of the conscious mind, or ego, and its dynamic relationship to the unconscious. His theory of psychodynamics, the idea that the psyche is fluid, is expressed in three of Freud's core ideas. The first idea is that the structures of the psyche, ego, id and superego, dynamically evolve out of one another in early life and thereafter their interrelationship remains a struggle for balance and control. The second idea is that each of the human drives or instincts is a flow of energy, which Freud called libido, and that this flow changes in intensity and can be redirected from one object to another. And the third idea is that the contents of ego consciousness are always changing, which reflects the dynamic interrelationship between ego, id, and superego.

Freud's map of the psyche underwent significant revision over the course of his long professional career, as did many of his theories. They have been further modified, extended, challenged, and transformed since his death in 1939. In his mature theory, Freud showed that "the mental apparatus" of an individual consists of "three realms or provinces," namely the id, the ego, and the superego.⁵⁵ These three realms owe their genesis to the dynamic nature of the psyche. Ego arises out of id as a response to reality and to fulfill its task of self-preservation. The ego then distills more energy from the id to form the super-ego, an internal representation of the civilizing influence of external authority figures. Once these structures are formed in early childhood, they remain in dynamic relationship to one another and influence the individual's life in visible and invisible ways. The id continues to express the basic drives in dreams, fantasies, and symptoms. The superego continues to reinforce the ego ideal and enforce an acceptable standard of behavior. The ego continues to be responsible for managing the continual flux of competing demands from

the id and the superego while simultaneously attempting to adapt itself to reality. Freud described the ego's task of self-preservation as "economic" to emphasize the attributes of exchange and competition between the three structures of the psyche.

Libido, or energy, moves among these three structures of the psyche, id, ego, and superego. An important characteristic of libido is the ease with which it can move from one object to another. Freud distinguished two aspects of the basic human drives: physical drives (needs) and mental drives (wishes). In his late theory, he concluded that there were just two categories of basic drives: the sexual or erotic drive and the death drive. The needs and wishes the individual attempts to satisfy, especially those arising out of the sexual (erotic) drive, are "remarkable for their plasticity."⁵⁶ Thus a core tenet of Freudian depth psychotherapy is that individuals can satisfy their needs or wishes in a great number of different ways. The plasticity of the psyche is one of the means by which individuals express their uniqueness. Sculptors channel some of their libido into creating three-dimensional art, writers channel their libido onto the page, parents channel their libido into raising children, and entrepreneurs channel theirs into starting a company. Libido or energy that is stuck, failing to behave like energy, signals psychic distress. The word "fixated" describes this neurotic condition, and reinforces the core idea that a healthy psyche is a fluid psyche.

The fluidity of the psyche is also evident in the way contents of consciousness change. As Freud put it, "consciousness is in general a highly fugitive state. What is conscious is conscious only for a moment."⁵⁷ One minute the person may remember something important or necessary and the next moment it may slip back into the unconscious. The fugitive nature of consciousness is one of the most consistently intriguing and occasionally disturbing aspects of the psyche. For better or for worse, the psyche is never in stasis. If people expend no energy keeping the thought or memory from consciousness, then they can recall it again easily enough. In fact, people characteristically produce an assortment of thoughts, images, memories, wishes and fantasies in a given period of waking life, nor does the flow stop when they are asleep. This fact is the most convincing evidence of the psyche's fluidity.

Jung agreed with Freud that the psyche is fluid, though his emphasis was slightly different. He did not describe the psyche as a battleground of contending forces. Instead, Jung adapted the symbol system of alchemy — the esoteric medieval art and precursor to modern chemistry — to speak about the fluid and dynamic nature of psychological processes. In alchemy, the adept worked material that was continually undergoing transformation. Each stage of the process, such as *separatio* (cutting, separating), *olutio* (dissolving), *coagulatio* (solidifying), and *sublimatio* (evaporating), described a substance in movement. Another metaphor we like for the fluid psyche, homier than alchemy, is cooking. Imagine making tonight's dinner, beginning with raw food and ending up with a cooked meal. The psyche works in very much the same way: continually in movement like any other organic substance, one stage of a process organically leading to another.

Jung also believed the fluid psyche is a self-regulating system like the body. It attempts to maintain equilibrium through a natural dialectic. "Every process that goes too far immediately and inevitably calls forth compensations, and without these there would be neither a normal metabolism nor a normal psyche." On this basis, Jung argued that "we can take the theory of compensation as a basic law of psychic behavior."⁵⁸ The compensatory nature of the psyche was reflected in Jung's theory of the archetypes as basic patterns or dynamic processes that constitute individual identity. For instance, the ego, which is the conscious personality, is compensated by the shadow, which behaves something like an unconscious personality. The contrasexual archetypes, anima and animus, provide a counterbalance for the individual's biological gender. In a man, the anima or archetypal feminine compensates for his maleness. In a woman, the animus or archetypal masculine compensates for her femaleness. Archetypal psychology, articulated by James Hillman, points out that a person of either gender may discover both an anima and an animus in the unconscious. The psyche is even more polytheistic, Hillman argues, than classical Jungian theory suggests.

While the basic archetypes such as ego, persona, shadow, anima, and animus develop over time and remain more or less present throughout a person's life, some archetypes manifest unexpectedly and spontaneously.

Their sudden presence illustrates the fluid nature of the psyche. It is possible to detect not only their presence but also their purpose and meaning as well. For instance, the image of Hecate or Artemis may emerge from the unconscious when a person's psyche needs more solitude and unrelatedness. "The archetype is not only an 'elementary thought' but also an elementary poetical image and fantasy, and an elementary emotion, and even an elementary impulse towards some typical action." Jungian psychology embellished the classical Greek archetype as pure Form or Ideal by adding to it "a whole sub-structure of feeling, emotion, fantasy, and action."⁵⁹ One does not merely perceive the archetype in an abstract, disembodied manner. One is often fascinated, compelled, or gripped by the archetype.

Jungian scholar Andrew Samuels considers the meaningful relationship between the turning points in someone's life and the appearance of archetypes.

Because archetypal layers of the psyche are, in some sense, fundamental, they tend to produce images and situations which have a tremendous impact on the individual, gripping him and holding him in a grip, often, but not always, with an accompanying feeling of mystery and awe; he will be unable to remain unaffected. We can speculate that turning points in a person's life are in many cases workings out of archetypal activity.⁶⁰

People who are about to undertake a creative work or who are entering a new stage in life often find an archetypal image, idea, or fantasy germinating in their psyche. Or they may feel themselves drawn to a place, a community, or an issue. By keeping the libido theory in mind, one can notice when a portion of energy is channeling itself in the new direction. This alerts the person to the fact that it is becoming erotic in the largest sense, and there is fuel for the creative fire.

On the other hand, one may feel that the libido is stopped, stuck, or it has drained away or moved on to another interest. How might one respond to this shift in eros? It's easy to become frustrated and despondent; there may well be a real loss involved here that requires a time of grieving. Instead of putting up a fight, this might be a good time to adopt the *yin*

posture of inquiry and follow the movements of eros just exactly as they are. As Hillman notes, eros has many ways of expressing itself:

Rejection, impotence and frigidity may also be eros expressions, part of the daimon's 'uay'. . . Eros need not be fought, controlled, or transformed into something nobler. *Its goal is always, in any case, psyche.* We are obliged to trust eros and its goal. Can anyone live authentically unless he believes and trusts in the basic meaningfulness and rightness of the movements of his love?⁶¹

Following the flow of eros is one way to acknowledge the fluid psyche. Allowing images and objects to come forward and express themselves — and also to fade back into unconsciousness where they gestate in the dark — supports the creative process and the creative person in a deeply revitalizing and transformative process.

COMMITMENT 5: THE PSYCHE IS SYMPTOMATIC

Freud and Jung paid particular attention to the individual and unique manifestations of the psyche, the *symptoms* that ask for attention and shape one's life in subtle and dramatic ways. Not only do depth psychology's insights "derive from souls in extremis, the sick, suffering, abnormal, and fantastic conditions of psyche," depth psychology owes its origins to the symptomatic psyche.⁶² Freud made this plain in one of the essays he wrote in the style of a public lecture, published in 1933 as *The New Introductory Lectures in Psycho-Analysis*. He began by addressing his readers as though they were an assembled audience with these words:

Ladies and Gentlemen, — I know you are aware in regard to your own relations, whether with people or with things, of the importance of your starting-point. This was also the case with psychoanalysis. It has not been a matter of indifference for the course of its development or for the reception it met with that it began its work on what is, of all the contents of the mind, most foreign to the ego — on symptoms. Symptoms are derived from the repressed, they are, as it were, its representatives before the ego — internal foreign territory — just as reality (if you will forgive the unusual expres-

sion) is external foreign territory. The path led from symptoms, to the unconscious, to the life of the instincts, to sexuality.⁶³

The beginning Freud referred to was his work with Josef Breuer and the series of detailed case histories they published in 1895, *Studies on Hysteria*. These first patients confirmed what Freud had begun to suspect: symptoms are meaningful and can be worked through repeatedly in analysis to produce psychological insight. The symptomatic psyche is a fundamental assumption of depth psychology and the symptom is the way psyche attracts attention. It directly led to Freud's theories about the unconscious and modern techniques to explore it. Without the symptom, the notion of psyche would be limited to consciousness, uprooting the soul from the dark and fertile ground of its being. To be true to the psyche, one is obligated to be true to the symptom.

"Whatever else may or may not be said of this unconscious," says Robert Romanyshyn, "it is the self restored to the thickness of flesh and to the depth of the world, a self with a history and a situation."⁶⁴ The patients who walk into the therapist's office come with their history, their situation, and above all, their symptoms. These symptoms are useful and meaningful in two ways. They reveal that something is wrong and they also suggest how it could be made right. As such, symptoms are "a way back to what has been forgotten, lost, ignored, or otherwise left behind."⁶⁵ Pursue the symptom and find the psyche, suggests James Hillman, because "the symptom is the first herald of an awakening psyche that will not tolerate any more abuse. Through the symptom the psyche demands attention."⁶⁶

The psyche that will tolerate no more abuse, including inattention, reveals itself between the cracks in conscious awareness. The conventional belief was and is that symptoms are random, meaningless disorders that interrupt a rational, orderly life. This is not so at all, said Freud in his essay on the unconscious. It is that all conscious acts that otherwise appear "disconnected and unintelligible . . . fall into a demonstrable connection if we interpolate between them the unconscious acts which we have inferred."⁶⁷ In other words, it is the chaotic discontinuity and fragmentary nature of conscious life that points towards an invisible connecting matrix, the unconscious. For the unconscious or partly unconscious individual, which is all people most of the time, the symptom is psyche's herald.

The symptoms that Freud and Jung attended to included physical ailments, psychosomatic illnesses, as well as psychological distress without physical symptom. For example, one of Freud's cases concerned a woman who had no feeling in her left hand. He tested the brachial nerves of that arm, which run from their origin in the cervical spine (the neck) to the fingertips, and found that they were perfectly healthy. There was no physiological basis, therefore, for the woman's experience of *glove anesthesia* — the total absence of feeling in the hand but not the arm. Rather than dismiss this patient's condition, Freud believed that it was real and valid and deserved his medical attention as a doctor of the psyche. The body, he discovered, was a particularly rich medium for psychological expression.

Even today the idea that the psyche is somatic and that the body expresses the psyche is unwelcome in many circles. But at the end of the nineteenth century, when Victorian repression had reached its peak, it was deeply subversive. Little wonder. The prevailing attitude, endorsed by virtually every other medical doctor, continued a two-thousand-year-old tradition of prizing the intellect and attempting to dominate the body or ignore it altogether. When Freud and Jung adopted the stance that the body was a source of vital information with something meaningful to say, they were true revolutionaries. Partly because this idea was revolutionary and therefore a dicey subject to address in proper society, Freud made a strategic decision. In his popular writings, he decided to introduce evidence to prove the existence of the unconscious with a more recognizable set of symptoms. Thus his collection of introductory lectures on psychoanalysis begins with lengthy chapters on *parapraxes*, which are slips of the tongue or pen that would be familiar to a lay audience. Such slips, Freud carefully argued, are unconscious though purposive mistakes that all individuals make in language and writing. Freud used these lectures to demonstrate two important and related points about his new science. First, mental health and illness could be visualized as two opposing ends of a continuum, with so-called normal people existing somewhat toward the healthy end. Second, all mental (psychic) acts have a purpose and meaning. It's up to the careful observer — that is, a trained analyst like Freud — to detect that purpose because such a person knows that nothing that goes on in the psyche is random.

Freud's introductory lectures ultimately ran the gamut of his major theories. In them, he acknowledged that some members of his audience would find his ideas shocking. He was right, of course. In fact, many professionals found Freud's ideas shocking and had done from the very beginning. The source of the controversy was not the attention Freud paid to illness (somatic or psychosomatic), *parapraxes*, and dreams. It was not even that he popularized such ideas as the unconscious and displaced the ego from its position of hegemony. The source of the controversy was that Freud disturbed the sleep of mankind by demonstrating, using legitimate scientific methodology, just how thin the veneer of civilization truly is. In his essay on the ego and the id, Freud said this:

If anyone were inclined to put forward the paradoxical proposition that the normal man is not only far more immoral than he believes but also far more moral than he knows, psycho-analysis, on whose findings the first half of the assertion rests, would have no objection to raise against the second half . . . This proposition is only apparently a paradox: it simply states that human nature has a far greater extent, both for good and for evil, than it thinks it has — i.e. than the ego is aware through conscious perception.⁶⁸

The prevailing view that Freud had to combat might be summed up this way: if repressing the symptoms of the psyche helped to maintain the illusion that humanity had truly evolved beyond, or brought under strict control, its base instincts, then so be it. Ignoring a few neurotic individuals was a small price to pay for sustaining the comforting belief in humanity's steady march towards moral and mental superiority. The irony is that Freud, a straight-laced bourgeois who in many respects lived a highly traditional life, refused to obey tradition. He fixed his considerable attention on the neurosis evident in his patients, and the culture at large, and made the symptom the empirical basis of his work.

Like Freud, Jung often described himself as an empiricist who paid attention to the symptoms of the psyche. However, the two men pursued depth psychology in different ways and to different ends in part due to how they defined and treated symptoms. Freud, as we have mentioned earlier, fully embraced the scientific *Weltanschauung* or what we today call classical

science. Jung bypassed the distancing stance of classical science in favor of more participatory methods, allying himself with the twentieth century new science of Einstein, Heisenberg, Bohr, and Bohm, among others.

The question of *what* people pay attention to and *how* they attend to it has important implications. Using as an example the glove anesthesia mentioned earlier, Freud tended to focus on bodily symptoms, but his work with hysteria was a profound breakthrough in understanding the body of the psyche. Freud demonstrated that the metaphorical nature of the symptom is even more powerful than anatomical cause-and-effect. That is, the physician's inability to detect a physiological cause for a symptom does not undermine the symptom's legitimacy. Freud thought beyond physiological cause-and-effect to psychological cause-and-effect. If the symptom presents itself, the psychoanalyst is professionally bound to attend to it. Jung focused on archetype, complex, and image, and seems to have been less interested in physical symptoms as manifestations of the psyche. His emphasis on image — manifesting in dreams, fantasies, artwork, and movement — and the importance of image to Jung's analytical psychology has been well established. It is encapsulated in Jung's famously terse definition: *psyche is image*. Paying attention to the image pays attention to the psyche.

Image, for Jung and many Jungians, seems to be ethereal and out-of-body. Hillman suggests this by using spiritual language to describe psyche as a vocation: "The call of soul convinces; it is a seduction into psychological faith, a faith in images and the thought of the heart, into an animation of the world."⁶⁹ Some depth psychologists believe that Hillman's emphasis on the imaginal precludes an embodied, emotional response to the psyche, which produces an overintellectualized approach that makes it "impossible to include problems such as unconscious shame, guilt or rage within its purview."⁷⁰ We disagree. Living images are highly idiosyncratic and psychoactive, meaning that they stimulate distinct physical and emotional responses, as Hillman explains:

It is through emotion that we get the exaggerated sense of soul, of honor, of hurt, of anxiety, of our own person. In emotion we get the awareness that we are not alone in ourselves, not in control over all of ourselves, that there is another person, if only an uncon-

scious complex, who also has something — often a great deal — to say about our behavior. So again, the finding of the soul through the unconscious is a stumbling sort of discovery. We fall into emotions, moods, affects, and discover a new dimension which, much as we wish to rid ourselves of, leads us downward into depths of ourselves.⁷¹

Hillman takes his lead from Jung, in a point Jung made in his late work *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. The soul "tends to favour the body and everything bodily, sensuous, and emotional."⁷² Accordingly, the task is to "reconcile ourselves to the mysterious truth that the spirit is the life of the body seen from within, and the body is the outward manifestation of the life of the spirit — the two being really one." It is only then, Jung said, that "we can understand why the striving to transcend the present level of consciousness through the acceptance of the unconscious must give the body its due, and why recognition of the body cannot tolerate a philosophy that denies it in the name of the spirit."⁷³

Paying attention to the symptomatic psyche is one of the primary ways people can give the body its due. What do symptoms have to say about the soul? What might the soul be saying by means of the symptom? Jung is correct that a philosophy of denial — soul sacrificed in the name of spirit — is damaging. Hillman makes an equally strong case that a philosophy of treatment — meaning overlooked for the sake of a quick solution — is just as damaging. If people rush to fix the symptom in the wrong-headed attempt to cure the soul of its psychopathology, what might they miss? "Before making moves to treat it, condemn it, justify it, or do anything else for or against it . . . let us stand for the pathological psyche by standing in it long enough to advance our claim that pathologizing is valid, authentic, and necessary."⁷⁴

It is vitally important to accept all of the ways in which psychological insight occurs. The psyche can and does express itself in the physical realm through symptom, sickness, and sensation, in the imaginal realm through image, fantasy, or intuition, and in the mental realm through the idea, the obsession, the delusion, or the thought. Furthermore, since the *anima mundi* or world soul is a key idea in Jungian psychology (absent in Freud), symptoms and sensations, thoughts and intuitions, can and do

arise from the things of the world. As we mentioned before, mountains, rivers, trees, and deserts, and also skyscrapers, freeways, prisons, schools and playgrounds are not inert objects without a soul or a voice. They are the more-than-human phenomena of this world that humans must learn to hear.

The degree of receptivity to each and every manifestation of the psyche varies from person to person. The essential point is acknowledging all the ways in which the psyche speaks. Awakening to any of these psychic manifestations may occur gradually or instantaneously. The psyche also has been known to nag, seduce, and importune. The point being, it isn't above getting a person's attention by any workable means.

In any inquiry that values the psyche, attention is essential. One should assume that the psyche is continually producing hints, suggestions, and insights, which flicker at the edge of conscious awareness all the time. It is probably true and it makes for a very rich creative experience. It is all too easy to greet this steady stream of information with a reductive "nothing but" attitude or altogether dismiss it as fantasy. But in treating such information with contempt, one may well be ignoring an inspired source of wisdom.

COMMITMENT 6: THE PSYCHE IS MULTIPLE AND RELATIONAL

Much of the writing in depth psychology refers to basic concepts and theories. It portrays psychic structures such as the id, the ego, the superego, the shadow, anima, animus, and the collective unconscious as constructs that allow the depth psychologist to pay attention to phenomena that would otherwise go unnoticed. A biologist might use a biological construct with a similar goal in mind — to notice, measure, and organize the phenomena he observes, which he then uses to refine his theory. But this scientific approach leaves little room for a relationship between observer and subject except for the most distant, neutral and supposedly objective kind. In science, this is considered the ideal relationship.

In his writing, Freud embraced this ideal relationship and wrote as a medical scientist, maintaining a formal, distant, and conceptual approach to the psyche. This approach is evident in the formal tone and systematic,

clear writing style in much of his work. In the Standard Edition of his works, Freud treats the psyche as an object to be inspected and encouraged his patients to be equally distant and objective. Rather than relating to the psyche, Freudian psychoanalysis as it is presented via Freud's writing focuses on the relationship *among* the three structures of the psyche, ego, id and superego. Freud portrayed their relationship as a contentious one in which the poor, beleaguered ego deserved both support and sympathy in its ongoing struggle to maintain civility and coherence. In a successful analysis, the patient's ego is ultimately able to dominate the unruly forces that make life so chaotic and demanding. As discussed earlier, some of Freud's most dramatic descriptions of the psyche were couched in the language of strife or battle, which is not surprising. He battled all his life to defend psychoanalysis, which developed in a particular social and political milieu that left its imprint on the infant discipline. This milieu was characterized by paternalism, imperialism, and the deadly competition for land and power that ultimately erupted in two world wars.

Jung's prose is poetic and associative rather than linear and systematic. Unlike Freud, Jung believed that the psyche makes itself known through a variety of means and methods. Revelation and intuition, two of these means, are legitimate sources of knowledge. In many passages of his Collected Works, Jung clearly views the psyche as a living entity rather than as a scientific concept, and advocates a participatory, intimate relationship with psychic phenomena. In addition to the dynamic relationship existing *among* psychic phenomena, the individual can engage in a dynamic relationship *with* the phenomena. The psyche is invisible but quite tangible and an entity one can personally know though never wholly grasp.

To know the contents of the unconscious psyche, such as the shadow, anima, animus and numerous other archetypes as *persons*, the individual must make the first move towards them. Otherwise they will remain merely theoretical constructs, arid images without substance, emotions, preferences, or agendas. Jung's method for approaching the contents of the psyche on a personal basis is called *active imagination*:

You yourself must enter into the process [of active imagination] with your personal reactions, just as if you are one of the fantasy

figures, or rather, as if the drama being enacted before your eyes were real. It is a psychic fact that this fantasy is happening, and is as real as you — as a psychic entity — are real. If this crucial operation is not carried out, all the changes are left to the flow of images, and you yourself remain unchanged.⁷⁵

Jung was careful to distinguish between two ontological states: a person's reality as a physical being and a person's reality as a psychic being. He was not so naive as to suggest that the imaginal figures who populate the psyche were *physically* real. But they are *psychically* real, and at this level of ontology one can and should engage them. It is the only way to know the multiple figures that comprise the psyche and the only way they will get to know the person.

Jung advocated treating the psyche and the many phenomena it produces as expressive others capable of being addressed and of addressing oneself. To borrow Martin Buber's phrase, one treats the psyche as a "Thou" and not an "it." Psychological life, including psychological inquiry, requires a shift from passive voyeurism to active engagement with these autonomous, idiosyncratic, individual persons. A way to do this is imagining the psyche as Psyche, the young woman from the myth *Eros and Psyche*, and welcoming *her* into the work. When the psyche becomes Psyche, it is a relatively easy step to re-envision psychic contents as psychic persons and begin a relationship with them, a move we discuss in Chapter 4. In psychological inquiry, one relinquishes the habit of observing, categorizing and measuring inert, impersonal objects and instead fosters friendship, familiarity, and even intimacy with the persons who populate the psyche.

Relating to Psyche and psychic images as persons first occurred to Jung at an early age. In his autobiographical work *Memories, Dreams, and Reflections*, he described how understanding anything of a complex nature required participating in an inwardly audible dialogue. From age 12 he began to see himself as consisting of two distinct personalities. Personality 1 was an insecure schoolboy with such traits as

Meanness, vanity, mendacity, and abhorrent egotism . . . Besides *his* world there existed another realm, like a temple in which anyone

who entered was transformed and suddenly overpowered by a vision of the whole cosmos so that he could only marvel and admire, forgetful of himself.⁷⁶

This is the realm of the *Other* or Personality 2. Jung stated clearly that he saw this figuring and multiplicity not as an imaginative boy's fanciful notion but as the true nature of psychological experience. "The play and counterplay between personalities 1 and 2, which has run through my whole life, has nothing to do with a 'split' or dissociation in the ordinary medical sense. On the contrary, it is played out in every individual." The relationship between Person 1 and Person 2 is portrayed throughout Jung's writing as a dialectical relationship in which both are needed to make something more. We will have more to say about the dialectical psyche later in this chapter.

Viewing the psyche as a living field populated with persons who engage the individual in dialogue is not as new as one might suspect, nor is it unique to depth psychology. Most creative people are familiar with the experience of the psychic field, though they may not use that language in speaking of it. For thousands of years artists have credited an invisible and ineffable source of their inspiration. Moreover, there has been a distinct tendency to personify this source as feminine. Socrates credited Diotema⁷⁷ and poets and writers throughout the ages have often referred to *her* as The Muse. Thus, individuals engaged in psychological inquiry easily may find themselves thinking of Psyche as a person and a partner in the work. To do so continues a long and venerable tradition that honors the organic sense that creators and their work exist within a living matrix of inspiration and wisdom encompassing what one can see and measure as well as what one can feel and intuit.

It should be evident that those who welcome the psyche already are obeying the third philosophical commitment of depth psychology — that the psyche is personal and more-than-personal. Humanity exists within it. Jung used the Latin term *unus mundus* to describe the infinite, invisible, and living psychic field that envelops and constitutes the world. It also is referred to as the *anima mundi*, which makes explicit that the world itself has a soul and all phenomena within it are ensouled. Welcoming the psyche obligates people to accept the reality of the psyche as an infinite

living field and to view their creative work as an exploration of one part of the field. Through such exploration, they gradually come to know the psyche as a living being. Or, to put it in poetic terms, the psyche will respond to this dedicated attention in the way a flower opens to the sun, by revealing more of its beauty and fullness.

Jung discovered that it was the alchemists' sustained association with the invisible forces of the psyche that was the real secret of their work.⁷⁸ The invitation to the psyche is not extended once and that's all. Rather, the invitation is a continual posture of welcome over weeks and months, which can become a lifelong practice. This welcoming posture is what Jung often referred to as a "good attitude." A former patient of Jung's described it this way:

By keeping quiet, repressing nothing, remaining attentive, and by accepting reality — taking things as they are, and not as I wanted them to be — by doing all this, unusual knowledge has come to me, and unusual powers as well, such as I could never have imagined before . . . So now I intend to play the game of life, being receptive to whatever comes to me, good and bad, sun and shadow forever alternating, and, in this way, also accepting my own nature with its positive and negative sides. Thus everything becomes more alive to me.⁷⁹

There are two principles embedded in this statement. The first principle is to be *attentive* to whatever phenomenon appears exactly as it appears. The second principle is to *accept* whatever phenomenon appears exactly as it appears. What emerges from the psyche requires "a certain tender care . . . as well as waiting, pausing, listening [that] takes a span of time and a tension of patience . . . This attitude is what the soul needs in order to be felt and heard."⁸⁰

Depth psychologists describe their relationship to the psyche as one in which hospitality is paramount. The classical Jungian attitude toward the dream, for instance, calls for welcoming figures and images that present themselves much as a gracious host welcomes her guests. Mary Watkins, who wrote a seminal work describing this attitude, titled her book *Invisible Guests*.

If we begin, as Jung did, with a respect for the imaginal other . . . then the activities of the imagining ego need not be de-personification, de-potentialization, reclamation and assimilation — but instead the building of relationships in dialogue. The self does not attempt to abolish the autonomous presence of the other . . . Development occurs in the dialogue between self and other.⁸¹

The extended metaphor of hospitality offers many insights into a person's relationship to the psyche. There is, as mentioned earlier, an emphasis on gracious welcome. Skilled hosts are generous, open-minded, and magnanimous; not tight, mean-spirited, or pusillanimous. They also will do their best to draw out all of the guests, helping them feel at ease and comfortable expressing themselves. Such a host will be inquisitive without being overbearing, wanting to enjoy each guest as a distinct and interesting character. Under the encouraging warmth of this style of welcome, images produced by the psyche will fully present themselves.

Watkins emphasizes the dialogical nature of the relationship between ego and imaginal guest. An image for this might be a nineteenth-century literary salon, in which a lively exchange of views and ideas enriches, inspires, and entertains the guests. Such an image vivifies a point we discussed earlier in this chapter, people are not single-minded. They naturally are comprised of many emotions, beliefs, values, feelings, moods, and modes of being, which they can imagine as the visitation of various archetypes or gods: Aries when they are angry, Demeter when they are maternal, and Hermes when they are quick-witted. The task of the psychological individual is to welcome this diversity without prejudice or repression, much in the same way that a skilled host creates a comfortable setting for guests. From the perspective of archetypal psychology, the multiple persons of the psyche do not indicate pathology. It is the way the dynamic psyche expresses its natural multiplicity. "Each imaginal figure provides a different perspective through which events and the self itself can be viewed"⁸² which adds valuable flexibility to the art of inquiry.

The idea of hosting the multiple persons of the psyche originates in Jung's early experiences with the fantasy figures who showed up in his dreams, visions, and artwork. During his frightening confrontation with

the unconscious after he and Freud parted ways. Jung was slowly introduced to the reality of the psyche and the autonomy of psychic persons.

Philemon and other figures of my fantasies brought home to me the crucial insight that there are things in the psyche which I do not produce, but which produce themselves and have their own life. Philemon represented a force which was not myself. In my fantasies I held conversations with him, and he said things which I had not consciously thought. For I observed clearly that it was he who spoke, not I . . . It was he who taught me psychic objectivity, the reality of the psyche.⁸³

As more fantasy figures began to visit Jung, he felt frightened and overwhelmed. Fifteen years later, a conversation with an Indian scholar about his own guru who regularly appeared to this man despite the fact that he had been dead for centuries, reassured Jung. He began to understand the presence of Philemon and other fantasy figures in his life as "the sort of thing that could happen to others who made similar efforts."⁸⁴ Over the course of his life he continued taking such persons seriously and welcomed their perspectives and insights.

Adopting a welcoming attitude toward psychic persons provides an experience of the multiple psyche and compelling evidence of the psyche's autonomy. Furthermore, it encourages one to relate to the psyche as Psyche — just as one would regard any other good friend. It also asks the person to expect the same kind of willfulness, individuality, sensitivity, reactivity, creativity, and self-expression from the psyche as one expects from another human being.

Regarding the psyche as Psyche, a person, has profound repercussions. First, it means that Psyche is a partner in any endeavor, "the very source of the creative impulse." It is the more-than-personal "deposit of all human experience right back to its remotest beginnings . . . a living system of reactions and aptitudes that determine the individual's life in invisible ways — all the more effective because invisible."⁸⁵ If one ignores or forgets that creative work is truly a partnership with the living Psyche, whatever one produces will be unpsychological. It may be laudable for other reasons, but it won't honor Psyche.

COMMITMENT 7: THE PSYCHE IS COMPLEX AND CONTRADICTIONARY

The postmodern era has been called an *age of disbelief*. It is a time characterized by a deeply situated skepticism and by a consequent loss of belief in any possibility of objective reality, first principles, or absolute truth. It is a time of complexity and contradiction — a time of deconstructed systems of thought. In all fairness to the history of ideas we should acknowledge that the postmodern critique is not new to the philosophical scene. One can find rich criticisms of objective reality as far back as Plato's dialogues in the figure of Protagoras and the Sophists attempting to discredit Socrates ideas about truth. In one way or another there has been a healthy debate about what may constitute truth or reality as long as claims to knowledge have been made. Perhaps the postmodern versions of this critical approach seem more radical, both because they are current and because they assault claims to truths that have been made more forcefully and prolifically than any, ever before.

The terms of the postmodern argument are new and more richly imbued with technical proof and contradiction. That fact of the argument is, we believe, given with the psyche. It is the nature of the psyche to be complex and contradictory beyond any ultimate settlement of what is true. Further, the more one examines the reasonable resting places of postmodern thought the more they resemble an acknowledgment that all claims to knowing must allow for complexity and prepare for contradiction.

Depth psychologists have made the peculiar move of founding their field of study on this shifting psychic ground and have consequently provided a way to see the current landscape of intellectual chaos as a kind of psychological homecoming. Central to both Freud and Jung's idea of the psyche is the notion that people are only aware of a tiny fraction of what shapes their values, beliefs, and behavior. This conscious fragment is embedded within an unconscious whole. The psyche, which is variously equated with the mind (primarily in Freud) and the soul (primarily in Jung), includes a spectrum of states of awareness that extends from the conscious to the unconscious. By paying attention to the entire spectrum of consciousness, Freud and Jung discovered evidence that the psyche is naturally composed of multiple parts that interact with one another in a

complex manner — even in healthy people who possess stable, coherent personalities. Since Freud and Jung, many Freudian and Jungian authors have discussed the complex nature of the psyche, frequently speaking of it in archetypal terms. For example, Christine Downing, who has written several books on myth and archetypes, says:

I have learned that recognition of the archetypal and universal dimensions of one's experiences can help free one from a purely personal relation to them. I also believe that one can celebrate the mythic patternings without losing an appreciation of the concrete and unique moments that constitute one's existence. This is what Freud meant by transference — knowing that one is Sigmund Freud and Oedipus, that I am Christine Downing and Persephone. Either description alone is insufficient.⁸⁶

The meaning of life is enriched by understanding its archetypal roots, its basis in myth. Without sacrificing any sense of uniqueness one can connect with universal patterns of human experience that dramatize the true complexity of the individual psyche.

Though Freud and Jung agreed on the complexity of the psyche, each man mapped its landscape differently and devised distinct terminology to define its principle features. Freud favored a more structured, hierarchical approach to the psyche than Jung. The early Freud drew the psyche as an oval, with a preconscious, a conscious (ego) and a personal unconscious, which he later came to equate with the id. The later Freud used a similar ovoid shape and spoke of the id, ego and superego, each having their own agenda. (As scholars have noted, one way to trace the evolution in Freud's thinking is by observing the transformation of the maps he used to refer to psychical structures.) Freud described the relationship among the parts of the psyche as dynamic, which he frequently depicted as inherently competitive. It is the ego's task to mediate among the competing demands of the complex psyche. "An action by the ego is as it should be if it satisfies simultaneously the demands of the id, of the super-ego and of reality — that is to say, if it is able to reconcile their demands with one another."⁸⁷ However, Freud was not confident in the ego's ability to do so. Individuals often have the experience of being internally divided

because they are subject to the centrifugal force of the different parts of the psyche. These parts of the psyche are not entirely distinct. They tend to blend into one another, acting as interrelated, dynamic processes more than separate, rigid structures. Thus one aspect of Freudian psychodynamic theory — the idea that the psyche consists of different structures each with its own agenda — rests upon the assumption of the psyche's complexity.

There is another way in which Freudian psychoanalysis rests on the assumption of a complex and contradictory psyche. Complexity exists *within* the psyche's structures. Whereas the ego tends towards coherence and logical order, Freud alludes to the fact that the conscious mind only approaches unity or uniformity. "Perhaps there is room in the mind for contrary purposes, for contradictions, to exist side by side."⁸⁸ The super-ego also is complex and contradictory since it is the distillation of many voices of authority that may or may not agree with one another. It is first formed in response to the parents, but "in the course of an individual's development, receives contributions from later successors and substitutes of his parents, such as teachers and models in public life of admired social ideals."⁸⁹ The id is an altogether different phenomenon from either the ego or the superego. It is "a chaos, a cauldron full of seething excitations" that has "no organization [and] produces no collective will." In the id, "contrary impulses exist side by side, without canceling each other out or diminishing each other."⁹⁰

Jung never mapped the psyche *per se*, but he frequently spoke of the psyche's wholeness and used the circle to symbolize this. He did not use this symbol, however, to imply that the psyche was a unified phenomenon. As Jung puts it, "the psyche is not a unity, but a contradictory multiplicity of complexes."⁹¹ Fissures in the psyche, which are openings through which unconscious content may present itself, reveal the psyche's fragmentary nature. These fissures intrigue depth psychologists because they are the starting point for inquiry into soul.

Jung's belief in the complexity of the psyche began with his early research using the word association test. When he spoke a stimulus word to a patient, he observed that the person responding was "not master in his own house" but instead under the influence of something *other* with

a distinct personality of its own. Jung noted that the patient's reactions would be delayed, altered, suppressed, or replaced by these "autonomous intruders." From this he developed the theory of the *complex*, a concept he introduced into depth psychology:

Whenever a stimulus-word touches something connected with the hidden complex, the reaction of the conscious ego will be disturbed, or even replaced, by an answer coming from the complex. It is just as if the complex were an autonomous being capable of interfering with the intentions of the ego. Complexes do indeed behave like secondary or partial personalities possessing a mental life of their own.⁹²

Jung equated his notion of the complex to the earlier theory of the fixed subconscious idea introduced by Pierre Janet. Janet, along with his teacher Charcot, had done pioneering work with multiple personalities in the nineteenth century. Jung's contribution was to discover that even the normal human psyche is complex and contradictory. In both the mentally healthy and the mentally ill, sub-personalities emerge that tend to be distinct, autonomous and willful. He called these autonomous sub-personalities "complexes," and found that they are not inherently pathological. Everybody has them. In fact, complexes "contain the driving power of psychic life [without which] psychic activity would come to a fatal standstill."⁹³

The complex became the basic structural element in Jung's map of the psyche, a clear testament to its complexity. Even the ego, which Jung defined as the center of the field of consciousness, is a complex. As the more-or-less conscious component of the psyche that gives the individual an enduring and stable sense of self, the ego is obliged to acknowledge, and relate to, the multiple persons that naturally inhabit complex psychic life. Frequently, what is most repulsive to an order-seeking ego is chaos. People are admired and rewarded for being decisive, which all too often means quickly eliminating alternatives and repressing complexity. It is just this tendency that the multiple psyche seeks to compensate.

The psychological individual can learn to welcome rather than shun everything unknown, no matter how repulsive, messy, or complicated

it may be. Receptivity to the psyche in all its manifestations requires a paradoxical attitude capable of holding the tension of the opposites. As Marie-Louise von Franz explains, a paradoxical attitude makes it possible to be receptive to the psyche, and receptivity to the psyche accustoms the individual to paradox.

Clearly there are two possibilities of consciousness, namely a rigid one and one which has a paradoxical attitude and therefore does justice to the paradoxical factor of the unconscious. The latter would be what you could call a consciously open system, an open *Weltanschauung* which is always ready to accept its opposite, or meet the opposite and accept its contradictions. If you have a conscious attitude which is ready to accept the opposite, to accept the conflict and the contradiction, then you can connect with the unconscious.⁹⁴

What von Franz calls "connecting with the unconscious" is what we have described as welcoming the psyche. It is, as she says, a readiness to accept the inevitable conflicts and contradictions of real life.

One might ask why conflict and contradiction are inevitable. The answer, according to Jungian theory, is that the unconscious compensates for the conscious attitude. Often this amounts to contradicting one's most cherished beliefs and attitudes and exposing the complexities in human behavior that one prefers to forget, repress, or simply not know. By showing the other side of things, the unconscious foment potential conflicts. This is one of the ways the psyche demands attention. Another result of conflict and contradiction is the widening of consciousness, which is the aim of psychological life and the means by which it occurs. Contradiction opens up a gap between opposing ideas and at the same time firmly establishes the relationship between them. Seeing the relationship, or seeking a way across the gap (which is not necessarily the same thing), stimulates further inquiry. We discuss the gap and its implications for psychological inquiry in the eighth philosophical commitment, next.

The idea of a complex and contradictory psyche is closely linked to another of Jung's key ideas, the principle of *enantiodromia*. According to

this principle, any idea, thesis, attitude, or activity pursued to its endpoint will lead to its antithesis. Enantiodromia is part of the psyche's balancing act, a kind of self-correcting mechanism that illustrates the cyclical and circular nature of wholeness. We noticed it, for example, as we were writing this book. Once we made a clear, decisive statement about the psyche or on behalf of the psyche, other voices and other ideas appeared at the periphery of our attention wanting their turn. It's something like actors waiting in the wings for their entrance onto the lighted stage. Though this energetic interplay of ideas can seem annoying or distracting, it fuels the creative process. The dynamic fluctuation is natural to the psyche and it is this pattern of movement, more than any other attribute, which demonstrates the psyche's holistic aim.

We have found that it is helpful to think of the complexity of the psyche in archetypal terms. Every archetype, or god, has its own distinct character, and with that character comes a set of values, behaviors and ideas. Focus, for instance, can be thought of as an Apollonian trait. When one's perspective is captivated by Apollo, psychological inquiry will be pure, efficient, objective, and intentional; that is, there is an aim to pursue, and pursue one must. Many people find themselves quite Apollonian in articulation of a particular point, like right now, in our attempt to *clarify* Apollo. (Apollo loves to be clear.) But as we write we're aware that dancing at the edge of awareness is a whole host of other ideas that, if we were to indulge them right now, would mess up the clarity of the explanation. That's Hermes, Apollo's brother. Hermes is the adventurous and undisciplined sibling who gets into everything, making lightning-quick connections between one idea and another. In some cases, of course, Hermes leads people down a false trail just for the sheer joy of the journey. But is it false? Here is where the ability to be flexible — to switch allegiance and follow another god — can be surprisingly fruitful. The clarity of Apollo conjures the playful wanderlust of Hermes. The task is to recognize this as a legitimate and worthwhile part of creative work. Every archetype is a fragment of the whole. Propitiating the gods who visit and the gods one wants to have visit is a way of seeking that wholeness.

COMMITMENT 8: THE PSYCHE IS DIALECTICAL

Reflection on all of the previous philosophical commitments of depth psychology reveals an interesting pattern of ideas. Once one declares that Psyche is real — the primary datum and ontological beginning place — one finds that subsequent commitments have a consistent leaning toward complexity, creativity, and motion. Then when one views the psyche as characterologically, spatially, or developmentally differentiated, as occurs whenever one posits an unconscious in relation to consciousness or an ego in relation to a Self, there arises a need for motion and engagement. In the Freudian tradition, as discussed in the context of the protean psyche, the theories of psychodynamics carry this idea of motion. Jung and his followers use a variety of metaphors, including alchemy, the interplay of archetypal forces, imagination, and individuation. What becomes clear is that inquiry that hopes to be psychological must take into account this characteristic of movement. Methods must simply learn to move, even dance, if they are to follow psyche. In the remainder of this chapter we examine some of those dance steps. Above all, we notice that the psyche favors a particular rhythm, the rhythm of dialectics.

The word dialectics derives from the Greek *dialektike*, which was a particular kind of speaking aimed at explanatory discourse. As a word, dialectic has been a bit of a troublemaker. It has moved into and out of favor in philosophical discourse and has shifted and added meanings without much regard for the confusion that might engender. It is all the more alluring because of this fluidity; it becomes a word that actually seems to dance to its own tune. In this book, we too are inclined to dance, and so we will give the word our own spin. It is a spin that has roots in Plato, branches out in the work of Georg W. F. Hegel (1770–1831), and leafs out more fully in the work of Hans Georg Gadamer.

Dialectic is not explanation. Rather, it is a circumambulating exchange of ideas that arrives at its truth prudently and intentionally, but indirectly. In the classical Greek tradition, dialectics as a pedagogical technique is commonly attributed to the master, Socrates, as rendered in the *Dialogues of Plato*. Later definitions have tended to limit the meaning of dialectic to the idea of progressive argumentation or refutation as a mat-

ter of actual speech between two people. However it is important for our story to retain Plato's sense, particularly referenced in the *Sophist*, that this kind of speech is inseparable from thought itself in that both are naturally conversational.

In Plato, and later in Hegel, dialectics serves to illuminate a potentially deeper or superior meaning — like a third thing. It is a kind of spiritual practice that leads to a truth that is pleasing to the gods. In Platonic philosophy this resolving movement of dialectics was a necessary response to the problem of a separation between the real and the ideal — the immortal form and mortal capacity to live it out. Perhaps the most repeated theme in the dialogues of Plato is that there is a permanent divide between earthly beings and the divine and that only the philosopher can hope to bridge it.⁹⁵ This divide or gap is the paradoxical capacity to imagine and hold deep faith with that which one seems to know, even though it cannot be proved or measured in the realm called reality.

In a larger sense, the gap is nothing less than the source of psychological life. The existence of the word *reality* and its root word *real* conjures its *others*, including the words ideal, unreal, imaginary or imaginal, and fictional. The gap between real and unreal that Plato articulates is the mother of all gaps including the gap between good and evil, upper world and under world, truth and confusion, transcendent and mundane, conscious and unconscious and so on. It is a gap that is so embedded in the philosophy and psychology of the Western mind that one could even say that depth psychology is a *psychology of the gap*.

It is this gap or differentiation within the thought frame that gives rise to so much that we say here about the lived experience of Psyche. But the gap also calls for a way across it. This way is the way of dialectics.

In modern times Hegel carried on a rigorous and hopeful project to articulate the practice of dialectics and present it as a natural philosophy of the psyche. Like Kant, Hegel acknowledged the role of the mind in the construction of reality. Hegel saw the ongoing dialectical activity of confronting perception, idea, critique, and understanding as the nature of truth, not an imperfect human attempt to gain truth. He articulated a view of the psyche and the world as implicitly dialectical. In this view all human thought and nature itself is composed of paradox and contradic-

tion but not in the pejorative sense of those terms. Rather, Hegel defended paradox and contradiction as the source of the natural and necessary movement that arises from any mixing of thoughts, images, and ideas. In that mix, paradox and contradiction are the stirring spoons of psyche, of being in the world.

Hegel's work on dialectics was an immense philosophical shift in Western thought. It promised to unite the practice of reason with the realm of the irrational, not as the enemies, but as objects of desire. Hegel's dialectic acknowledged the gap without leaving people in the angst of separation. Instead, he invited them to experience doubt, confusion, and contradiction as the necessary ingredients of an unfolding dialectical synthesis. For Hegel, truth and the methods of attaining it could retain some measure of paradox because the mind is capable of comprehending it.

In the postmodern era Hegel's work has been criticized and widely discredited primarily for its roots in the romantic philosophical tradition and for its teleological commitment. Hegel was explicitly committed to an evolutionary view of humanity. The necessity that drives Hegelian dialectic is ultimately a theological argument and it carries a Western, even Christian revelation of God's plan for mankind. But though it would likely be displeasing to Hegel, his view of the dialectical world does not require the postulation of an evolutionary goal or divine plan. Hegel's description of the movements of the dialectical psyche can stand alone simply as the way of things and how one knows them.

Following Hegel, others picked up various threads of the dialectical project. Marx and Engels, for example, developed their theory of *dialectical materialism* while in another part of the world the American psychologist William James advocated the nineteenth-century philosophy of pragmatism. These efforts often fell into the same trap that caught Hegel. They aligned themselves with an end vision or telos so that the dialectic was aimed toward some sort of developmental or evolutionary end and not simply a natural, rhythmic movement between ideas, values, and images. One current resurgence of Hegelian thought has emerged right within the community of Jungian scholars and depth psychological theorists. Through its critique it has given new vitality to the realm of archetypal psychology. Wolfgang Giegerich, both a philosopher and a Jungian ana-

lyst, has taken depth psychology, and particularly his own field of Jungian psychology, to task for being intellectually lazy for its failure to continue what he sees as psychology's primary task, an exploration of the logical life of the soul. In his book, *The Soul's Logical Life* he sets himself a corrective task, "I want to push archetypal psychology with its imaginal approach forward beyond the half-way mark at which it stopped."⁹⁶ Giegerich takes the position that the soul's being is rooted not in its contents or images but in the bridging action of dialectical thought. Most important in his criticism is that this thought, or logical life, has a forward movement toward greater truth. In other words, he suggests that the dialectical or logical life of the soul is progressive and he criticizes psychology for being regressive with its backward gaze on myth, culture, and history. Inevitably, Giegerich's view of the dialectical psyche recalls the Hegelian passion for a goal or *telos*.

We suggest that the value of a *telos* lies more in its mythic sense than in some literal line of development. By myth we mean an evocative fiction that, by virtue of its being psychologically true, draws one to its conclusion. The desire for a *telos* or final destination of the psyche is a psychological necessity that one needn't translate into literal necessity. In fact, the more the *telos* is literalized, the less psychologically valuable it is. As a myth, however, it is enormously valuable. It always alludes to place not yet visited, an idea not yet comprehended, a world not yet perfected, a form of enlightenment not yet attained. As myth, *telos* encapsulates the desire and longing that fuels the movement of the dialectical psyche. As myth, *telos* keeps the dialectical psyche ready for what is needed now, and every moment of "now" that succeeds this one. As myth, *telos* discourages one from literalizing a natural or divine goal for psyche, a stopping place. It helps one to resist becoming located and fixed in a temporal or culturally-bound political idea. The myth of *telos* keeps the psyche in movement; or, more to the point, keeps people moving in accord with the natural flux of psyche. In the end the *telos*, or goal, of a dialectical psyche is to continue its dialectical movement.

In the 1960s the German philosopher, Hans Georg Gadamer revisited the work of Hegel on dialectics. In *Truth and Method: Elements of a Philosophical Hermeneutics*, Gadamer advocated dialectics as an ontology, a way of

being in the world in the Heideggerian sense. Dialectics, he said, "designates the basic movement of human existence, made up of its finitude and historicity." Therefore dialectics "encompasses the whole of [the individual's] experience of the world." It is evident that Gadamer's dialectic is less a technique and more a consequence of existence in a world full of gaps that create the desire for bridges. The movement of understanding, he says, "is encompassing and universal."⁹⁷ Moreover, understanding is a participatory activity where the participation is as natural as, say, breathing. As such, any method or way of understanding should flow from one's very being. If method does not follow character, then it will have no hope of revealing character. One's character, one's being in the world, and the psyche itself, are all essentially dialectical.

Gadamer's work with hermeneutics portrays understanding at the level of day-to-day experience and not at the conceptual level. In this, he followed others in the tradition of phenomenology. Still, much of what is written about dialectics focuses on processes of thinking and can appear, at times, too abstract. The psyche manifests itself in many ways other than thought, including in the life of the body. Trusting in this, we offer a way of seeing the central image of the dialectical psyche in a very few moments of embodied thought. We invite you to do something you can't *not* do, but we ask you to do so with unnatural attention. We invite the act of breathing.

Sit or stand in a comfortable way and simply take in a breath slowly and consciously. Do not hold the breath or breathe excessively deeply but only slowly enough to allow for this focused attention. Exhale in the same way. Set up a slow rhythmic cycle of breathing that allows for attention. As you do this try to locate the body's great desire to breathe. Notice that at the end of each inhaled breath the desire shifts from wanting to inhale to wanting to exhale. Notice the point of this shift and imagine it to be the end point of the arc of a pendulum, a steady swing back and forth. Each swing is uniquely itself. Notice how differently it feels to breathe in as opposed to how it feels to breathe out. Yet also notice how the end of the inhaled breath gives itself up so willingly to the beginning of the exhaled breath.

The powerful desire to inhale is quietly forgotten as you remember the powerful desire to exhale and vice versa. In such a way it is possible to spend large amounts of time unaware of the entire business of breathing — to become unconscious of your body's great desire to breathe in and to breathe out. You simply forget that in satisfying the desire for one thing you give birth to the desire for the other. It is possible, of course, to conceive of breathing as single cyclical act, which it is. Breathing in and breathing out are so mutually dependent that it makes sense to see them as one thing. But if you truly remember each desire — the way that the desire to inhale has its own particular quality, which, though forceful, is different from the desire to exhale — then it is evident that the body teaches people how to host the dialectical psyche and its world full of *ones* made of *twos*.

The body is full of such dialectical processes. People are born with two eyes that provide a visual argument in favor of depth perspective. Likewise two ears, and two hands; people have two feet and two arms to swing as they walk with them. The very skin reminds people of their cellular level concern with distinguishing between the inner and the outer worlds. But at the same time, the skin, like that neutral moment of arc in the pendulum of breathing, is a reminder that the boundary is necessarily permeable and not so easy to define.

The body provides an ongoing reminder of the feel of the deeper rhythms of the psyche. Of course this modest object lesson is not new, most people have had some exposure to it along the way. But perhaps it is a valuable reminder here, where it underscores the point that the idea of dialectical rhythms is more than just a pertinent metaphor for psychic life — it is the literal way of things from the perspective of psyche. Note we refer to the plural *rhythms* here because we are not dealing with a single or primary dialectic when we talk of a dialectical psyche. Rather, the best image would be that of a fantastic clockwork of dialectical pendulums swinging in an infinite number of arcs and periods, all influencing each other, forever and timeless. In a sense each person lives every moment in an embodied movement of enantiodromia.

The entity of the pair is pervasive in the body and the imagination. However, there is nothing in this view that seeks to privilege pairs over larger groups. We simply want to acknowledge a kind of back and forth

movement and the tendency for something clearly articulated to long for its inarticulate other. A second criticism, noted by Gadamer, is that the "I-Thou" image of the dialectical psyche is sometimes unduly circumscribed within a personalistic or person-centered frame. This tendency must be overcome in a depth psychology. Recall that each personal mind is in the psyche and not the other way round. People tend to hold conversations in thought and image because that is psyche's, and also the world's, way of knowing and being.

Let us move from the personal then, and take the ebb and flow of ideas themselves through this dialectical perspective. Ideas are not the property of the thinker but rather hold each thinker in their sway. If that is so then perhaps ideas possess their own real being, have "I-Thou" relationships to each other, and like air they are breathed in and out. Then one might begin to see how some very compelling ideas can, as noted earlier, emerge on the scene, take a prominent position, and then begin to constellate their seeming opposites in a kind of rhythmic dialogue. Such a dialogue or discourse holds humanity's attention for a time, inspires new ways of thinking, and reverberates with old thought. Then perhaps the whole business goes back into background and becomes a kind of obvious given, like breathing, not needing particular attention. In this way ideas are never wholly new but rather are remembrances and recombinations of themselves, just as all fleshy creatures are. So much of Jung's view of the psyche was based on this dynamic of recycling — ideas birthing ideas, consciousness arising from unconsciousness and vice versa — which he experienced over and over again. In a reflection on his sense of re-discovering the world's existence while walking in the East African bush he wrote, "Nothing can exist without its opposite; the two were one in the beginning and will be one again in the end. Consciousness can only exist through continual recognition of the unconscious, just as everything that lives must pass through many deaths."⁹⁸

In closing we return to the image of the dialectical psyche as an infinitely complex clockwork fascinated by its own riddles and tickled by its capacity for discovery, forgetting, and remembrance. But in this clockwork let us focus on the energy and swing of the pendulums more than on the gears. It is not so much a clock keeping time in a chronological or developmental sense but rather in a polyrhythmic and cyclic sense in

which the ebb and flow of one set of ideas and attitudes crosses paths with other sets of ideas and attitudes at various times and places. The immense complexity of this image is extended both inward and outward as its movements are taking place not only at the personal level but in the community, the culture, the more than human world and throughout the cosmos. In psychological inquiry the special task is not merely to answer questions at their surfaces but to see how these deeper rhythms of thought and feeling interweave to shape not only answers but also the very natures of the questions themselves. For this one must learn to dance with the dialectical psyche.

The depth psychological perspective discussed in these eight philosophical commitments provides a meaningful and dynamic approach to inquiry. This perspective, in fact depth psychology itself, is at home in the borderland between the known and the yet-to-be-known (which also includes things that never will be fully known). Here one becomes aware of the creative tension between consciousness and the unconscious, exterior surface and interior depth, and the literal and symbolic which stimulates the human imagination and the quest for knowledge, insight and wisdom.

The depth psychological perspective recalls the partial nature of knowledge and consciousness, encouraging the person engaged in inquiry to remain humble in the face of all that can be known. As L. L. Whyte pointed out, there is real danger in total obsession with partial ideas. Psychological inquiry, which pays as much attention to the unique and particular as to the conventional and general, helps individuals avoid this obsession. In psychological inquiry one remains alert to the other thing, to what one doesn't see now, or hasn't sensed yet.

Adopting a depth psychological perspective on inquiry means adopting the ways of the psyche. The psyche is naturally fluid and dynamic and one's attitude should reflect this. Be inclusive, discriminating, precise, penetrating, intimate, distant, hot, cool, insatiable, selective, malleable, reserved, categorical, or impressionable, flexibly adopting any or all of these postures to produce a richer yield of information and understanding. The psyche also is relational. Seek to know and to be known, and relinquish the illusion of sterile objectivity. Psychological inquiry is a

commitment of the whole person and, as a result, the work will be unpredictable, confusing, difficult, satisfying and possibly transformational.

The next two chapters discuss the extensive nature of psychological inquiry and its demands upon and ramifications for the researcher. Chapter 4 describes moves to invite the psyche into the work as a guide and partner, whereas Chapter 5 outlines the stages of research and suggests answers to some common questions asked by people engaged in the art of inquiry.