



Carl Gustav Jung: A Brief History

Background and Connection with Freud

Born in Switzerland in 1875, [Carl Gustav Jung](#) studied medicine at university and became a psychiatrist.

In 1906, he wrote to psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud expressing an interest in Freud's theory of unconscious motivation. The letter heralded the start of a seven-year relationship between the two men – for example, Jung was appointed president of the International Psychoanalytical Association on Freud's suggestion when it was formed in 1910.

Later, Freud and Jung would split, initially triggered by Jung's public criticism in 1912 of Freud's focus on the Oedipus complex and infantile sexuality, while he was lecturing in the US. This rupture allowed Jung to pursue his own theory of personality, and he developed analytical psychology.



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Key Differences between Freudian and Jungian Psychology

First, as suggested in the original incident that began their split, Jung did not agree with Freud on the role of sexuality in the human psyche. Jung asserted that the libido was psychic rather than simply sexual energy. He saw psychic energy as key in producing a person's motivation in both pleasure seeking and conflict minimisation.

Second, while Jung agreed with Freud that our past experiences (especially in childhood) affect our current behaviour, Jung also placed an emphasis on our future aspirations as key determinants of this.

Third, Freud and Jung both believed that the [human psyche](#) is formed of unconscious and conscious elements. However, Jung asserted that there was more to the unconscious mind than Freud suggested.

The Unconscious Mind

Jung proposed that the unconscious mind has a two-layer structure: the personal unconscious (containing our own forgotten memories – sometimes organised into 'complexes': collections of memories based on a particular theme) and the collective unconscious (sometimes also known as the 'transpersonal unconscious').

The latter unconscious is shared with other humans and contains memories and behavioural patterns that derive from our shared human past in an ancestral and evolutionary sense. Jung explained various common human tendencies, drives and fears in this way.

Jung's Archetypes

Related to his concept of the collective unconscious, Jung claimed that certain aspects of this can develop into parts of the personality, which he termed 'archetypes'. Archetypes are universal and so bridge different races, culture and religions; they can often be spotted in arts (e.g. literature and paintings). They could be thought of as stereotypes, and examples include the wise old man/woman, the hero, the trickster, the jester, the magician, the sage, the outlaw and the explorer.

Other archetypes include the anima/animus (the mirror image of our biological gender – so women possess a masculine animus and men a feminine anima), the shadow (the animal side of us – akin to Freud’s concept of the id), and the self (which brings all our experience together). Jung claimed that each of us is aiming to achieve ‘selfhood’ through ‘individuation’ – a concept rather like Carl Rogers’ self-actualisation.

The Conscious Mind

Jung saw the conscious mind as containing the ego (the centre of our sense of identity), the persona (the mask we show the world, in order to conform with our society), two attitudes (extroversion and introversion) and four cognitive functions (thinking, feeling, sensing and intuiting). In a person, each of these functions could then be combined with either introversion or extroversion, giving eight possible personality types.

Impact of Jungian Analytical Psychology

Jung is less well known than Freud, and his ideas have generally been less popular – perhaps partly because he tended not to write about his ideas in ways that were accessible to laypeople. Some also say that his ideas have been seen as less scientific, drawing more on Eastern mysticism than on Western psychology. His work is generally seen to have become increasingly spiritual as he became older.

One key way in which Jung has contributed to lay language on personality, however, is through the concept of introversion and extroversion, which he was the first person to name as such.

Myers–Brigg Type Indicator (MBTI)

Another way in which Jung’s personality theory is very much alive in today’s world is through the Myers–Brigg Type Indicator (MBTI), a psychometric personality test created by Americans Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers. The MBTI measures four variables: extroversion (E) or introversion (I), sensing (S) or intuiting (N), thinking (T) or feeling (F), and judging (J) or perceiving (P) – the last two being added by Briggs and Myers. These combine into 16 possible personality types, indicated by the relevant initials – e.g. INFJ. A popular form of this personality test is known as the ‘16 Personality Types’ and questionnaires to help you identify which you are – often referred to as the ‘16-point personality test’ – are widely available on the internet, for example at www.16personalities.com.

Balance and Polarities

The central therapeutic concept in Jung's analytical psychology is that of balance. Jung believed that life comprises opposites (polarities) and that how well a person manages to balance these is key to their psychological wellbeing. He suggested that when someone is out of balance, they dream of one of the archetypes, which comes to correct the imbalance; this is known as compensation.

For example, with regard to the persona, Jung argued that humans need to balance the demands of society with their own individual needs. The self, meanwhile, provides the balance between the conscious and the unconscious layers of the psyche. Individuation represents a kind of balance in that the person is neither flooded by their unconscious (as might happen in psychosis) nor out of balance in how they relate to it (as might be the case in neurosis, leading to depression, anxiety and personality disorders).

The animus/anima also requires balance – because if we ignore our animus/anima, part of our personality is repressed, which is not healthy. For example, Jung believed that men who would not connect with their feminine side could not enjoy full psychological health. Modern-day Jungian psychologists believe that we each have both an anima and an animus.

Similarly, the shadow needs to be kept in balance too. Jung argues that people deal with the shadow by denial, projection, integration or transmutation. He emphasised how important it was to gain conscious awareness of the shadow so as to avoid projecting qualities of the shadow onto other people.