

## Further Reading

A. Casement, 'A Brief History of Jungian Splits in the United Kingdom', 1995, to be published in *Journal of Analytical Psychology*

Michael Fordham, *Children as Individuals*, Hodder & Stoughton, London, Putnak, New York, 1969

Andrew Samuels, *Jung and Post-Jungians*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London and Boston, 1985

Andrew Samuels, B. Shorter and F. Plaut, *A Critical Dictionary of Jungian Analysis*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, Boston, 1986

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# A Living Experience

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The production of the one or centre by distillation.

Jung, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, paragraph 185

A manifestation which arises from the tension of opposites.

Jung, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, paragraph 121

These two quotations from C.G. Jung express succinctly my own experience in analysis and in my training as an analytical psychologist. The first refers to the alchemical metaphor which, for me, best describes the analytical process. In my case this was a process whereby disparate fragments in myself, originally divorced from each other, eventually came together, and culminated in a more integrated personality.

The second quotation describes the transcendent function — that force which overcomes the tendency of warring opposites, which enabled another side of my personality to be integrated, creating a new synthesis. Nearly two years after qualifying, I am aware that this process of integrating the deep changes which have taken place in every aspect of my life is still happening.

The training has felt like a long process of initiation. Preparation began years be-

fore I applied. I had initially undertaken an analysis for my own personal reasons. Only later did I realise I would like to train to become an analyst myself. After thoroughly investigating many trainings I decided to apply to the Society of Analytical Psychology. I prepared myself for the application to train by undertaking an infant observation, in which I observed an infant from birth for one hour a week over two years. Discussion in weekly seminars of the baby's psychic growth proved to be one of the most useful experiences for me in my clinical work. It not only helped me to relate to early mental states in myself, but also taught me to hold the tensions that arose in work with patients, without feeling the need to interfere. I had already completed the required number of hours of analysis needed before application, but I had to gain experience of working with patients in the NHS. I obtained an honorary contract with the local psychotherapy

department and also worked one day a week in a psychiatric day centre. I already had counselling experience and continued with this work.

Once I had all the necessary experience I applied. The first hurdle was completing the application form; this required me to write a description of myself and my history, which still felt so intensely private. I had three individual interviews with training analysts, followed by a day of group interviews with other potential trainees. I recall the terror of becoming tongue-tied, but I found enough anger in myself to speak up and was delighted when I was accepted for training.

Life had to be rearranged so that family, work, analysis, studying and driving the fifty miles to and from London twice a week for evening seminars could all be slotted in. It was a heavy commitment for my family, too. I had to purchase a car and get used to driving long distances regularly. This pushed me through the last traces of my agoraphobia.

There were eight of us in the group who found ourselves training together, four men and four women, which made for a comfortable balance of energies. Getting to know each other took time, with inevitable splits and tensions. Difficulties tended to be worked on by individuals in their own analysis, rather than in the group. In the seminars the emphasis was on discussing theoretical and clinical readings, but the dynamics of the group were not neglected. We had a tutor who stayed with us for three years and helped with these and other matters through regular meetings, once or twice a term.

By the end of the first year the group was becoming a very important part of my

life. There was intense paranoia around as we faced a further interview to assess our readiness for clinical work. We felt this to be yet another test to see whether we would be allowed to continue on to the second year. To our intense relief we all were. Now we were all able to begin work with our first clinic patients, under weekly supervision from a training analyst. Finding a patient was more difficult for me as I was living outside London; but eventually one turned up. Seeing a patient four times a week plus weekly visits to the supervisor became yet another thing to fit into my already tight schedule.

Once into the second year I found that the theory started to merge with my growing individual and practical experience. Theoretical frameworks, such as Michael Fordham's ideas on defences of the self and deintegration, and reintegration, became less abstract and were apprehended increasingly as tangible experiences in myself and in my work with patients.

During this year I also studied a three-year-old boy. At this stage I considered switching to the child training for which such a study was a prerequisite. I felt I already knew the phases of childhood well — both as a mother and as a child. It was instructive and revealing, however, to witness the play of this child in relation to psychological development and the theories I was learning.

During the final year the search for a second training patient began in earnest. Once begun, this meant yet another tightening of the schedule — another four hours a week to see the patient, further time to fit in another supervision, plus keeping my work going to pay for it all! It is amazing how I found the energy, but

support from the group, analysis and supervision was enormous. However, during this year my outside life fell apart. My father became terminally ill and died, leaving a complicated estate which it fell on my shoulders to sort out. My own family also suffered under the pressure and my husband left, putting great strain on me in my final year. The one stable element in my life became the training, people in the seminar group and my own analysis. At a distance I can now appreciate the value of going through the pain and rage of my outer life falling apart at the same time as knowing the experience of being held.

During the third year we presented a paper to the trainees in our year, those in the year below and to members of the Society. Writing it was an agonising experience; I felt it exposed to the core the way in which I worked.

Although the seminar part of the training was still finishing after three years in 1992, there seemed to be so much still to assimilate that the group decided to continue to meet once a fortnight for clinical seminars. The aim was to help us to write our final papers, in managing to complete which we all varied greatly. However, my supervisor became terminally ill and I had no choice but to write mine as quickly as I could. I pulled out all the stops and am grateful that, in spite of his illness, my supervisor was able to read my paper and approve it before he died.

Once again I was left bereft, grieving over this latest loss. I then had to acquaint another member of the committee with my work, before at last I could submit my

paper and to my immense relief be accepted as an Associate Member of the Society. Exhaustion followed — mingled with a feeling of isolation, as everyone in the training group now went their own ways. I suspect this is not experienced so sharply in London, but being in Cambridge I had not had sufficient time to keep in contact with local colleagues.

The opportunity to add a fitting sequel to the four tough years of training arose when I was invited to participate in what proved to be one of the last seminar groups held by the late Michael Fordham.

In the past two years I have found the cumulative effects of fifteen years of analysis and training have become partly integrated. However, the process of integration is never static and complete; when my daughter had her first baby I found that all I had learnt through training analysis and infant observation proved invaluable in helping this new mother and baby (and grandmother!) contain the powerful feelings around at the time of the birth and afterwards. I had gained changes within myself that were not only about work in the analytical session, but that I could also take into relationships in the outside world.

My experiences, both in analysis and in training, have wrought very deep changes in my life. Huge archetypal figures have lost their power; much anxiety and worry has evaporated. Above all, relationships are now fulfilling and nourishing. Jung's words, with which I began, have become for me a living experience.