

Uncovering Your Shadow



If you've ever felt stuck in a creative block, or judgmental towards another, or afraid to show your real self or shame/embarrassment of any kind, then you've experienced your shadow. We've all got one simply from growing up in a world that tells us things are "right/wrong" "good/bad" "positive/negative" - the people closest to us from a young age help us (unconsciously) develop a shadow by imparting their own limited belief systems on us.

Shadow is a term coined by Carl Jung as the part of us that we deny or repress (often unconsciously) because we feel shame around it.

The challenge is our shadows live inside us and are often the driver of our behaviors whether we realize it or not. Our shadows are often the very blocks that keep us from moving forward in our lives.

Our shadows will continue to perpetuate until we bring the unconscious conscious and heal it.

As the saying goes, "what we don't own, owns us." Shadow work can bring up uncomfortable emotions but as we expose these emotions and bring them out into the light we can start to see the alchemy of this work. Things that once kept us stuck no longer have that affect, things that once triggered us no longer do, situations that we used to find ourselves in frequently are no longer showing up. This is the beauty and power of healing the shadow.

Having a shadow doesn't make us bad, it makes us human.

When you can sit with this, you can start to meet your shadow with understanding. This is how you integrate it.

Before doing this work, it can be helpful to ground/center within yourself. Take a few moments to close your eyes and take 10 deep inhales and exhales out.

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How to Spot the Shadow

Our shadow can often show up through judgment, shame, envy/jealousy, and fear of being unloveable. Below are some questions for identifying how these fit into your shadow and ways to better meet it with understanding.

Judgement:

Are you judging someone right now? Who is it and why?

Have you ever acted out or felt the same way this person is now? In what ways? How did it make you feel? If so, what would be a better way to handle the situation?

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Shame:

Are you feeling shame around something right now? What is it and why?

How is this shame holding you back?

In what ways could this be teaching you something about a situation or about yourself?

Moving forward how would you want to act/behave differently? How can you start doing that now?

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Envy (usually involves 2 people)

Are you feeling envy toward someone or something?

What specifically are you feeling envious towards?

What characteristics about this person or thing do you long for in yourself?

Do you believe also have those characteristics or can create those for yourself, in your own way? Why or why not?