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## **WHOLENESS IN CREATIVITY: CULMINATION OF JUNGIAN AND DABROWSKIAN THOUGHT**

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**Abstract:** The creative ability has distinguished the human race from other beings in their struggle for survival. "The secret of creativeness," is an abstraction that has tempted many great minds into building theoretical structures that try to explain the creative process, but fail to do so for a majority of creative artists (Jung, 1933). The core psychoanalytic viewpoints include different approaches towards creativity. Freud (1908) correlated the general representative view about the psyche of a man with the process of creativity. He argued that work of art arises from the pathological condition similar to neurosis hence creativity reflects the pathological condition of an artist. The repressed wishes and desires, in his views, were the driving force behind the genius and every art work is a sort of release of the later (Arieti, 1976). Freud opined that only unhappy people experience fantasies and daydreaming and their unsatisfied wishes play an integral part in the creative process. An art gesture as described by Freud's psychoanalytic view depicts the sexual or heroic schema of an artist.

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## **JUNG ON PSYCHIC WHOLENESS**

Jung's explanation of creativity had a contradiction with the Freudian view. He saw human being as more creative and a lesser amount of passive recipient of environmental influences than had Freud. Jung (1928) tried to coordinate between the spiritual understanding and scientific investigation while discovering the unusual patterns of growth towards the psychic "wholeness".

According to him the total structure of psyche consists of a number of separate but interacting systems. The principal ones are the ego, personal consciousness and its complexes, collective unconscious and its archetypes, persona, anima or animus, and lastly shadow. In addition to these, there are attitudes of introversion and extraversion and the functions of thinking, feeling, sensing and intuiting described as the rational processes in terms of logical analysis through which an individual orients himself with the inner and outer reality.

Jung put a considerable emphasis on collective unconscious to which he believed to be more important than the personal unconscious as it is the foundation of power, wholeness, and all the necessary internal psychic transformations. He described archetypes as the universal structures in the collective unconscious which are comprised of a strong creative force along with many other qualities. The process of creation according to him has a feminine quality and is related to that of "mother" archetype. Addition to this, he propounded that archetypal images arise from the unconscious surface to restore harmony when an artist is experiencing psychical imbalance. Jung saw this as a natural development process and drive toward wholeness to which he termed as "individuation".

Jung also identified shadow as the "seat of creativity" representing the true picture of one's thought process (Jung, 1983). The shadow otherwise as described in his theory consists of the deepest and darkest part of the unconscious which was inherited from man's prehuman ancestors. Despite of its function as a reservoir for human darkness, the experiences of shadow illuminates strength, compassion, creativity and potential for all, creating a depth of connection of the world we live and work in.

Jung (1980) described creative individuals as men of thought, who have finely differentiated brains coupled with the sensitivity of a woman and the emotionality of a child. The creative individuals are often less inhibited and confounded which eases the flow of their creative



spirits. Jung (1957) stated that the work of genius is different in the way that it fetches up hidden fragments of memories lies deeply in the unconscious in order to build them into a new and meaningful structure. He believed that a person becomes destructive when unconsciousness gets distanced from the consciousness through repression. But as the creative individual gradually balances with consciousness the destructiveness transforms itself into a nurturing energy feeding the creative self.

### **JUNG AND DABROWSKI'S PERSPECTIVE ON EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

There are certain similarities in the theoretical postulates of Jung and Dabrowski on the emotional development of an individual. They both see personality as structured however stresses the uniqueness of this structure in every individual. Dabrowski (1964) in his the concept of *Positive Disintegration* described a complex aspect of human development during which the previously held personality structure must come apart in order to be replaced by higher-level personality structures. The psychological development in an individual takes place through the disintegration of a lower level of intrapsychic organization with the replacement of a higher level. The theory of positive disintegration views life crisis in a positive light by considering the "emotional turbulence" as turning point to higher development and indication that growth from deep within is struggling to occur (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977; Dabrowski, 1972).

Creativity, aptly described by Jung (1935) is the attainment of a wilful control of one's psychic balance. He believed that strength of creativity lies in the unconscious which is channeled by the consciousness with a strong urge to create. Dabrowski (1972) connected creativity with "divine madness". He explained creativity dynamism as different abilities and talents finding their expression in a search for "otherness" for non-stereotyped facets of reality. He explained creative instinct as an assembly of cohesively organized forces, often of great intensity oriented towards a search for the new and the different in the external and internal reality. A creative instinct according to Dabrowski (1973) seeks new realities and gives rise to psychological awakenings however it must combine itself with self-perfection instinct in order to achieve with higher levels of development. Self-perfection once achieved further enables other instinctual forces such as identification, empathy, self-consciousness and self-control in higher developmental processes.



Jung and Dabrowski understood the process of individuation as a slow and sometimes difficult growth and maturation towards the state of integration and a harmonious working between ego and the self. Individuation has been described as a process of transformation whereby the personal and collective unconscious is brought into consciousness by means of dreams, active imagination or free association to be assimilated into the whole personality. They both saw the development of personality as a natural process however only those individuals can reach a possibly highly degree of consciousness who are destined for it and have the urge for a higher differentiation.

The process of inner transformation in their viewpoints it not just reserved for highly intellectuals but who have enough developed moral qualities (Jung, 1953) and creative instincts can reach through a disintegration to a high level of cultural development (Dabrowski, 1970). It involves the realization that the qualities one sees in others and which one finds most noticeable and later provoking strong emotional reactions are their own hidden unconscious emotional expressions. This has an enriching effect on the personality and fosters empathy, maturation, compassion for the social relations while making creative contributions for the society.

Jung and Dabrowski both perceived the psychological difficulties as a starting point for the developmental process also act as an indicator for a wider consciousness. Jung (1964) while putting the creative illness in his viewpoint suggested that state of depression, frustration, stagnation, confusion, neurosis and psychosis often leads to the progressive phase of individuation. This however only implements on people who have the potential and urge to reach the heights of their self. This statement resembles the Dabrowski's levels of disintegration wherein a state of psychic disequilibrium can be seen in the level II and this breakdown leads an individual to the next III level of disintegration. Both Jung and Dabrowski had thus recognized the severe mental illness towards a progressive disintegration towards self.

Another similarity between both theorists is that they both characterized personality development towards the psychic wholeness. Jung in his theory described this process by realizing the existence of innate psychic function with gradual development of the other three. Dabrowski (1970) similarly spoke about breaking the one-sidedness of personality while putting an emphasis on the overall growth of one's nature. The self as described by



the both theorists is embracing not only the positive aspects of one's character but also the dark sides of their own personality.

Jung and Dabrowski had also emphasized on the mystical experiences of the ego as an important psychic experience leading to the exploration of the meaning of one's own existence. Jung (1943) pointed out that individuals cannot give a complete picture to their identity unless they surrender themselves to a spiritual authority. He further continued that in order to reach a unique height one must reach the unlimited extent of the unconsciousness. Dabrowski saw the nature of one's religious experience as an important indicator of personality development. Both the theorists had put an emphasis on the areas of the psychic life in the form of functions (thinking, feeling, sensing and intuiting) and overexcitabilities and saw them as a mode of dealing with the nonconcrete realities.

In spite of the similarities in their work some contrasts also can be seen between their explanations regarding these psychic functions. Jung sees the functions as pairs of opposites where when one pair is active and preferred other remains neglected in the unconsciousness. On the other hand according to Dabrowski even if one type of overexcitability is dominant in an individual, other dimensions of overexcitabilities are seen as parallel dimensions rather than opposite pairs. In some cases they all may possess an equal strength. All modes of overexcitabilities, according to Dabrowski are present in an individual but when reactivity exceeds the intensity of the overexcitability exceeds the strength of a simple response to a particular stimuli. On the other hand, Jung believed that strength of a function can only be realized when other functions are given less importance. Jung and Dabrowski's theoretical formulations had another major contrast on their explanations about the sources of psychic tension. Jung sees the tensions arising between the two pairs of major and inferior functions. He described individuation as a path leading to an increasingly conscious relation between ego and the self, wherein the tension is relieved through the union of conflict arousing opposites by transformation of impulses and instincts into excellence.

Dabrowski also saw overexcitabilities as the main source of tension but not due to any opposition in them but due to the fact that they are different from the normal. He considered the disparity between the personality ideals and the lower order impulses as the main source of psychic imbalance in an individual. He described that resolution of psychic



conflicts is achieved after the inner closeness of the personality ideals. Dabrowski noted that individuals on the IV and V level experience minimum psychic tensions due to the lesser conflict between the lower impulses.

Notwithstanding the contrasts between the two theorists there is still a similarity between their descriptions of the personal growth in a creative individual. They both emphasized that overall personal growth of an individual centers around the constant search for moral development, existential awareness, self-judgments and the discovery for a hierarchy of values. As they both have explained that transformation of individuality only exists when an individual longs for exploring one's identity despite of constant emotional turmoil.

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