



Spiritual Development in Adult Replacement Children (ARC)

Murray Stein, Ph.D. in dialogue with
Kristina Schellinski, M.A.

17. January 2022

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It is my great pleasure to welcome Murray Stein, Senior Jungian Teaching Analyst & Supervisor at ISAP-Zürich, Past President of IAAP and of ISAP, and author of Jung's Map of the Soul, Minding the Self, two volumes of your life-time's inspired writings on Individuation and many other books.

You have been a **soul guide** to many, in your practice, in teaching and in your writings. You have also been a great mentor to me.

Thank you for agreeing to record this dialogue for the replacementchildforum.com, founded to help replacement children and mental health professionals in a position to help them. This is an existential condition, a syndrome with many factors coming together and which can cause mental and physical suffering.

But - and this is the silver or even golden lining to this condition – this condition can lead replacement child **to a call to individuation**, it can act like a motor, like a booster for the spiritual development for an adult replacement child. It can invite to a search for meaning, for the true self.

“How do you see the spiritual development and connection to soul with respect to the replacement child condition?”

Murray gives his view of spirituality in general and with specific attention to potential for development in replacement children.



“The origin of spirituality or religion, has to do with death.

And why is that? I think it’s because at the death of loved ones, close ones...somehow, the spirits hover about...the word spiritual actually means spirit, there are spirits. What is a spirit? You can’t touch, you can’t see it...it’s invisible and yet it is a presence, an invisible presence... “ Murray Stein

“Transcendence or being aware or even close to spirit(s) is a hallmark of the replacement child condition. ‘When death rocked the cradle’ ...this can be an opening, to another world. Because of the absence, there can come a knowledge or sighting of images of a presence, that can be an extraordinary opportunity. “ Kristina Schellinski

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“We know that every human being is unique and one-of-a-kind, both genetically and spiritually.

“Souls are singular and irreplaceable”
Murray Stein, 2019

The core of the ego is a reflection of the centre of the personality, the self...the center of the self is a precious and unique being whom one should *become* and identify with.

This is the essence of becoming who you are.”

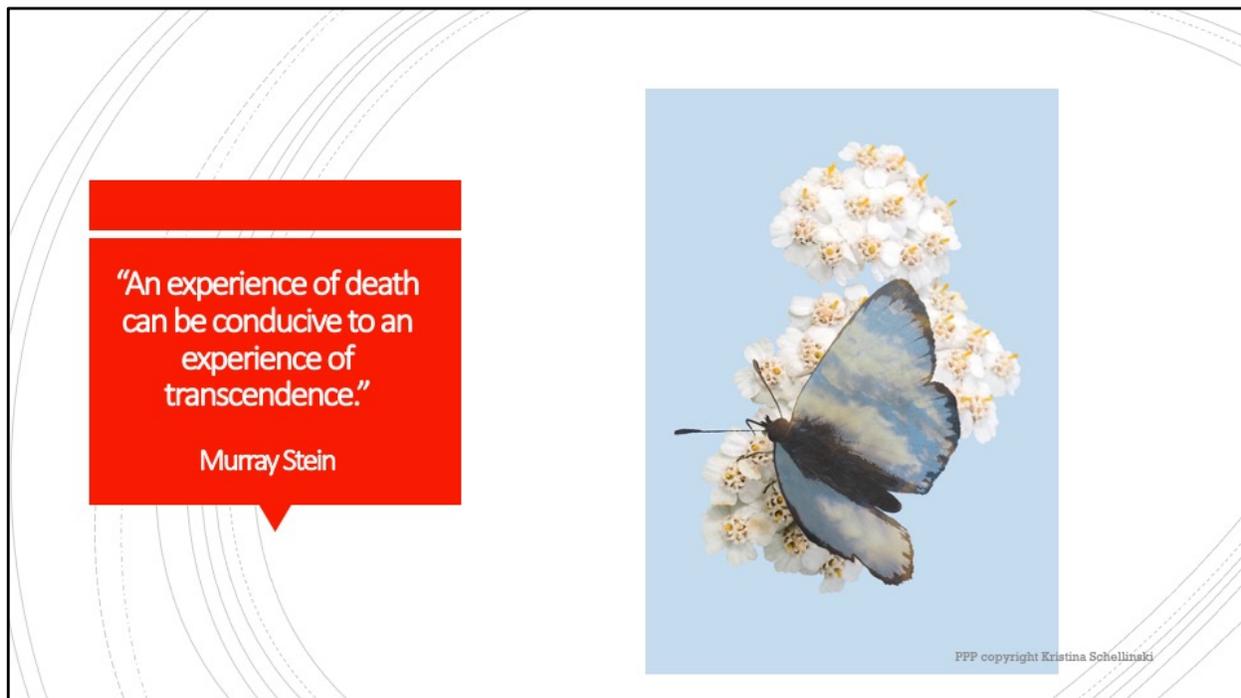
(Foreword by Murray Stein in: Schellinski, *Individuation for Adult Replacement Children. Ways of Coming into Being*)

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A first step is the conscious recognition of the replacement child condition. Something within the human being is stirring, the true self is wanting to be recognized...

A recognition of the emergence of self is an important step in this process of consciousness-raising; this can be experienced in daily life, in synchronicities, dreams, visions, and help adult replacement children, and indeed any of us, experience a rebirth into our own life, as a psychologically new-born individual.



The butterfly is a symbol of the soul, of psyche. (Photo courtesy of Frieder/Cecilia Roessler)

“An experience of death can be conducive to an experience of transcendence” says Murray Stein.

A spiritual awakening has been related to me by replacement children in my practice.

Nothing grandiose or esoteric but an opening to another dimension. Johanna Glaser, author of *“Federn haben eine starke Mitte”* (2021) said: *“My feeling of becoming myself is, in the end, banal...but something has shifted. ‘I now see a meaning to my life. I can tell where there is “Geist” (spirit): I can feel it in a replacement child, where there is living spirit, spirit tending towards the life force, recognized, reconnected with, given its due, and gratefully acknowledged.”*

The replacement child condition can give rise to a great deepening of consciousness, a spiritual awakening.

Carl Gustav Jung is a replacement child, born after three children had died.

“He invited the spirits of the depths, in mid-life”, said Murray Stein. “We can read in the Red Book about the visitations by the spirits of the dead...death was in the air and his mother would have been hyper-aware of the possibility that he would not make it, a kind of anxiety...this is picked up by the unconscious of the child, so the spirit of the dead comes into the picture very strongly with replacement children, ...very early, very deeply...spirituality in my mind has to do with paying attention to the unconscious, the spirit world, the invisible world.”

A replacement child may ask: Why me? Why do I live and not the other? Why – and what for am I replacement child? The answer may lie in the search for an answer to this existential question:

“What am I here for to discover, to contribute, to offer to our understanding of existence?”

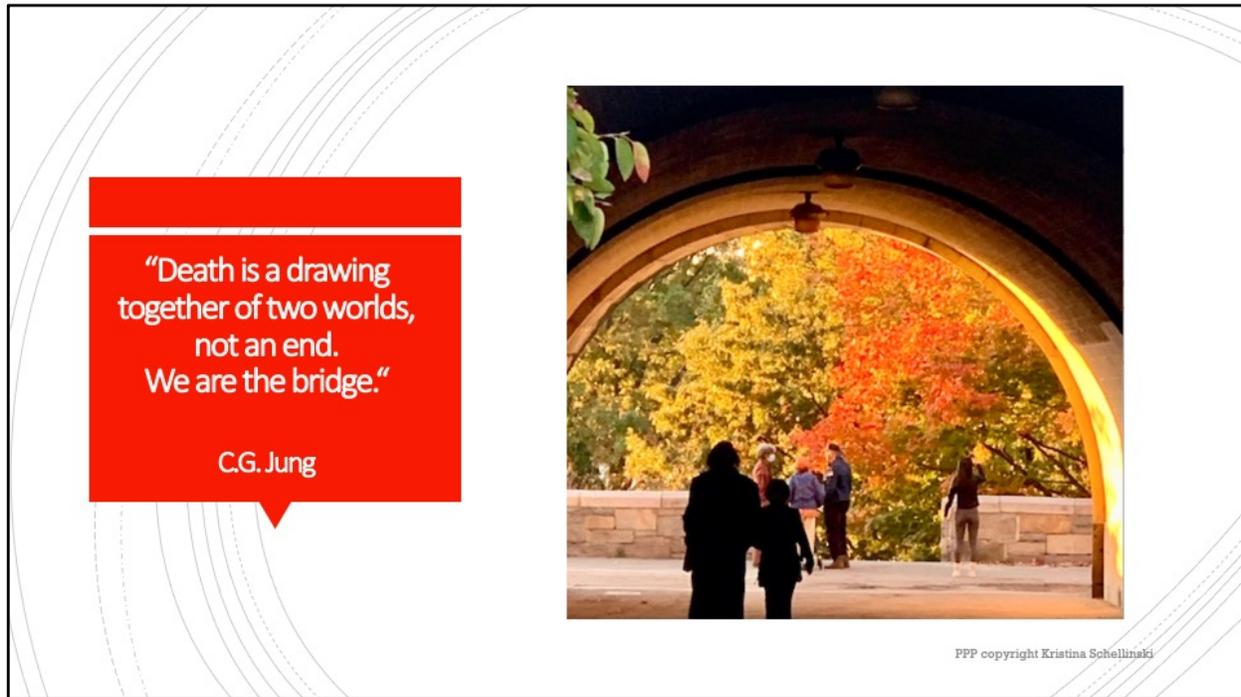


Photo courtesy of Rita Battat, Co-Founder of replacementchildforum.com

Replacement children are challenged to overcome a very early experience with loss. The replacement child is a bridge between a death in the family and their new life force coming into the family.

Murray Stein says we are given a name but the true name of who we truly are we may have to discover ourselves.

"A cat has three names, the name everyone knows, the nickname one may call it by, and a name, only it knows! When the cat meditates, when it gazes into the distance and recognizes who it is...its secret name!" T.S. Eliot

REPLACEMENT CHILDREN
THE UNCONSCIOUS SCRIPT



True life stories of growing up in the shadow of a lost or impaired sibling.

Rita J. Battat & Abigail Brenner, MD

Foreword by Katie Couric

One Example:

“Replacement child June had been born as AnnMarie but was called June by her adoptive parents.

During a visit to the Pyramids in Egypt, June describes the following experience: I asked [the Sphinx]: ‘Who was I in a past life?’ I clearly heard a voice say, ‘It’s not who you were that matters . . . WHO you are in this life is what matters.’

I resounded, ‘I am June.’ ‘NO, you are not!’ was the reply! I had to pause and reflect on that. June was the name given to me by my adoptive parent. My birth name is AnnMarie. . . . On this night, just before my 49th birthday, I said, ‘Well, I am AnnMarie.’

A vibrational energy went through me. . . . I asked my fellow travellers to call me AnnMarie and the way that name ‘bounced’ off the temple walls and energy went right through me was like a cleansing healing. I had to go within. I reclaimed my true self! I celebrated . . . my first birthday . . . this trip completely changed my life”

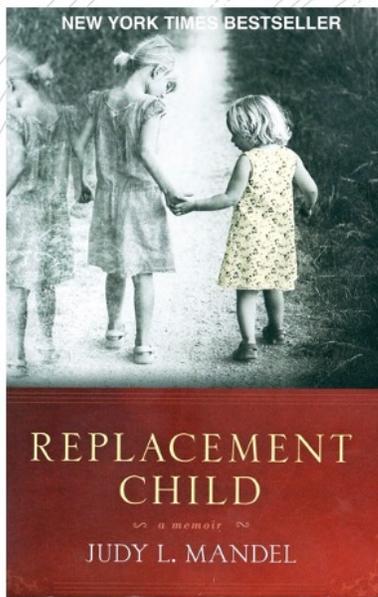
(in: Battat & Brenner, 2015/2021)

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Murray Stein has worked with adopted children who were also in this replacing situation who wanted to find out who their biological parents were but who needed to discover who they themselves were, discovering their true self.

The replacement’s child’s path of individuation is about breaking through to another reality, to a vision of “Who am I?” The true self.

Consciousness is meeting with what is hidden in the unconscious, like in this cover of the book by Rita Battat.



“I am older now than you will ever be.

Sometimes you come to me on the wind. A gentle whisper on a morning breeze. Not to frighten your little sister.

At first I didn't recognize you, but I know it's you. Walking to school on a crisp fall morning I hear music. Sometimes a tune.

She was just seventeen . . .

Other times a soaring trumpet or a wailing sax. Music from the trees, inside the clouds.

You point to everyday enchantments. Teach me to wallow in the small delights of this fleeting life.”

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An airplane crashed into the family home of Judy's parents, in 1952, killing her sister Donna and maiming her sister Linda and severely hurting her mother.

Judy writes that she was conceived and born to heal her parent's wounds of grief and loss and as a salve for the burns her mother suffered trying to save her family.

The inner reality is the reality of soul.

C.G. Jung



Jung made the experience his soul had flown away...“withdrawn into the unconscious or into the land of the dead. There it produces a mysterious animation and gives visible form to the ancestral traces . . . gives the dead a chance to manifest themselves.”

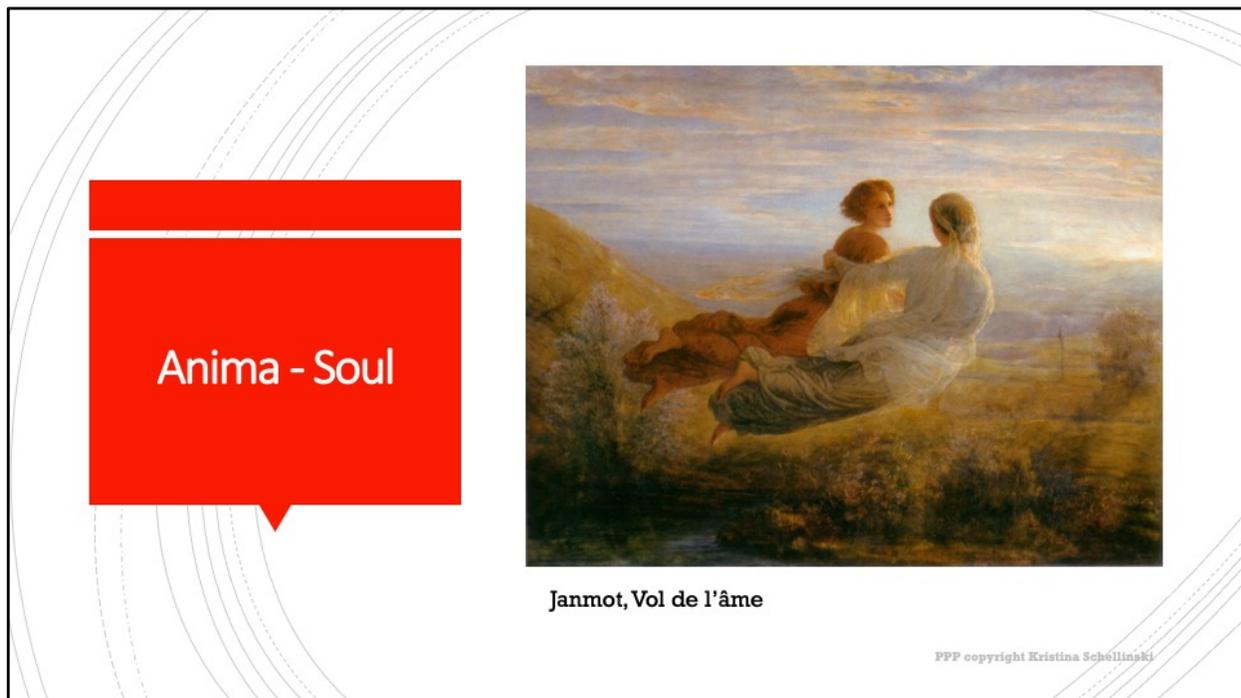
(C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* , p. 191)

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In the Red Book Jung cries out: *“My soul, where are you? Do you hear me? I speak, I call you – are you there?”*

Jung searches for his soul. From a recognition of his soul, from meeting with his anima, Jung drew all his strength, as we can read in *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* as well as the Red Book.

“He researched the human soul and his goal was the Self” (Andreas Jung, 2011).



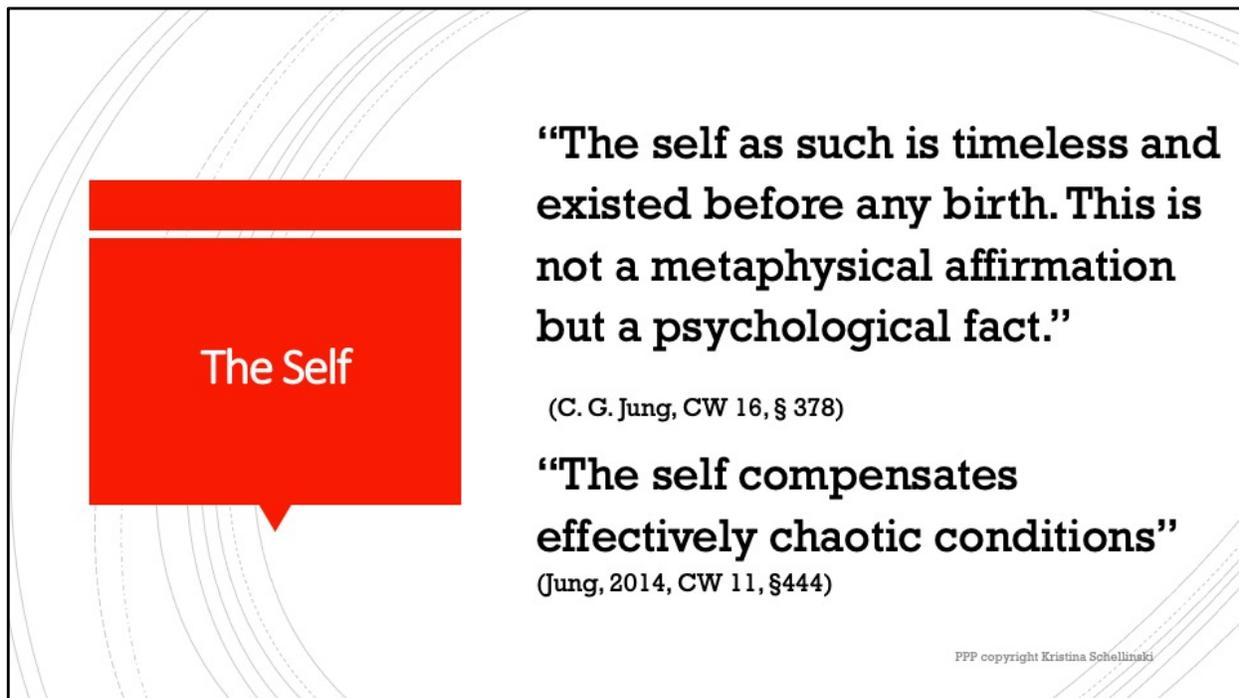
Jung used the terms **soul** and **anima** in some of his writing interchangeably.

Anima, a Latin term means breath, the vital part, that which animates. For Jung, that is the soul, or psyche (gk).

Jung also defined anima as the feminine part, the other part in a man's personality, and animus as the masculine aspects in a woman, opposites which are to come together.

Anima and animus are archetypal images, they are 'soul images' (Jung, CW 6). They are not-I. Being-not-I theorized as an image of the contra-sexual image, a man for a woman, and a woman for a man (this is conceptualized 100 years ago, so a bit dated!)...but by this not-I, Being-not-I Jung meant: **that which is outside himself (herself), that which is belonging to soul or spirit** (Samuels, 1996)

Behind the animus, Jung asserted, lies the 'archetype of meaning'; just as the anima is the archetype of life *itself*. (CW 9i, § 66) » (ibid) Jung said it was a great challenge, a true effort to discover an image of his anima in the transformation process, but that this was vital. (see: *Red Book*)



The Self

“The self as such is timeless and existed before any birth. This is not a metaphysical affirmation but a psychological fact.”

(C. G. Jung, CW 16, § 378)

“The self compensates effectively chaotic conditions”

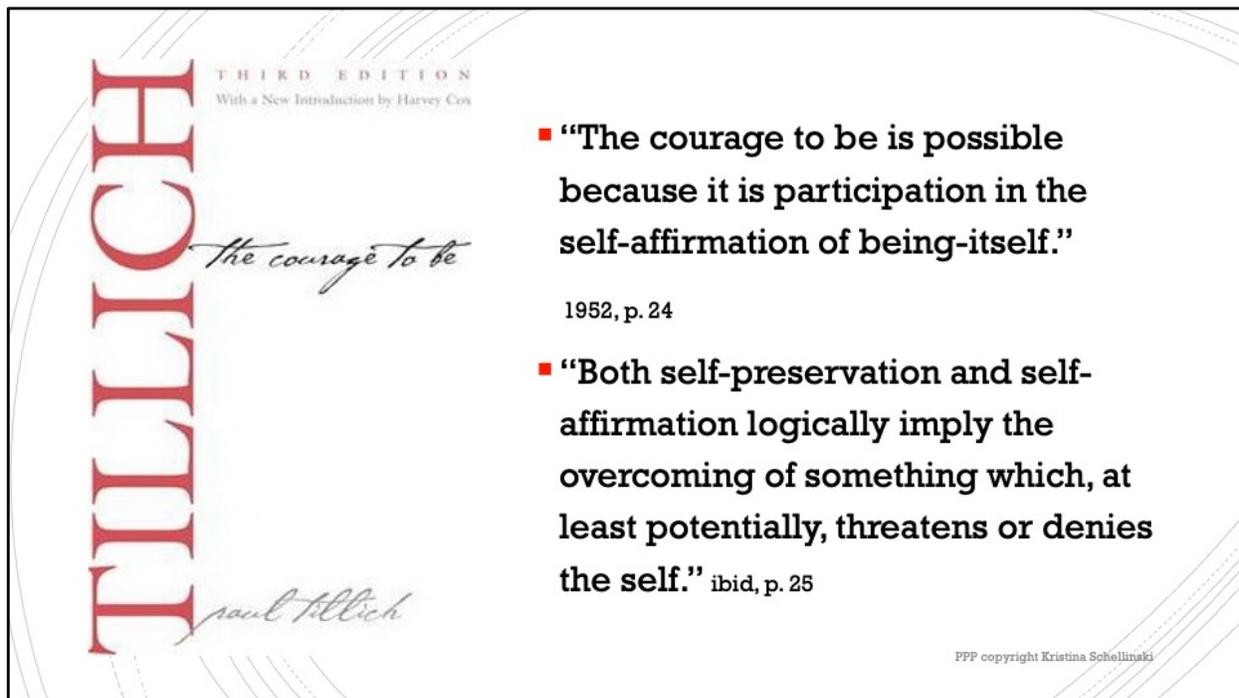
(Jung, 2014, CW 11, §444)

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Even just supposing the presence of such a source of existence as the self aiding individuation can be life-changing.

While there is suffering in adult replacement children but there is also this force, this being carried along force, pushing or nudging them to understand their existence – despite or *because of* the forces non-being. One may be struggling in this exploration, and meet with anxiety, even annihilation anxiety but this struggle may lead to the “Courage to Be”.

Like in the book by Paul Tillich: *The Courage to Be* is about **Being in the face of non-being**.



Paul Tillich, a theologian and philosopher, wrote in 1952 that carrying the anxiety of fate, death and meaninglessness brings us to discover **Being in spite of non-being**.

p. 34 *"anxiety is the state in which a being is aware of its possible nonbeing...anxiety is the existential awareness of nonbeing...the awareness that nonbeing is a part of one's own being"*.

When we work with bereaved parents *and* replacement children in our practice. Our task is helping them to work through their feelings of despair, of grief, powerlessness of loss, so that a foetus or new-born does not get to carry this.

If the grief was transferred unconsciously to the replacement child, the practitioner may get to feel this anxiety and can help the replacement child become conscious thereof. We are there to comprehend, understand and empathize with that kind of an abyss, that non-being, and to recognize if we, as much as the patient may defend this. We join the client there, so the analysand is not alone. Feeling alone, feeling not good enough, feeling as-if-I-were-not-I-myself are tell-tale signs of the replacement child condition, because a grieving parent may be perceived as non-present, as not mirroring the child, it is the 'dead parent' André Green described so well.



Source: <http://jungcurrents.com/persona-individuation-jung>

Image: Labirinto do Outeiro do Cribo, 1000 BC

In these cases, the consciousness-raising individuation process can help the replacement child transform, to come to a self-realization, to the realization of the archetypal Self which is nudging it towards self-realization.

*“The aim of individuation is nothing less than to **divest the self of the false wrappings of the persona on the one hand, and of the suggestive power of primordial images on the other.**” C. G. Jung, CW 7, § 269*



Jung's own visionary experience of wholeness is reflected in his Mandala painting of the Window on Eternity (2009, p. 159).

At first, Jung did not admit that this was his creation.

“The whole thing seemed like a window opening on to eternity,” wrote the dreamer, referring to himself as “the dreamer” in the third person (in: Concerning mandala symbolism, CW 9/I §654–55).

Jung described this as ‘A luminous flower in the center, with stars rotating about it. Around the flower, walls with eight gates. The whole conceived as a transparent window.’

This painting was linked to his famous Liverpool dream (recorded in his *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*). Jung commented: “I had had a vision of unearthly beauty, and that was why I was able to live at all. Liverpool is the “pool of life.” The “liver,” according to an old view, is the seat of life that which “makes to live”.



This uniqueness we all have to discover, says Murray Stein. And a replacement child especially.



“In my work with replacement children, I noticed in the consciousness-raising journey they towards a point where they recognized that kernel of truth that inspired their being and then they keep it for themselves. In a sense it is holy. Kristina Schellinski

“In the mystery religions... you would go into these caves and have an experience of the Goddess, when you came out you never spoke about it, it’s secret in a positive way, this kind of experience gives us uniqueness and value and depth, and the replacement child can have that experience and maybe has it more than the rest of us do, because it is such an issue there. Murray Stein

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