

Frankl's Answer to Jung

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Binswanger, Frankl's friend and the founder of *Daseinanalyse*, worked under Jung at one point, but there is no record that Frankl and Jung ever met. This is surprising when one considers the similarities between them.¹ Both men worked to extend psychoanalysis through the inclusion of the spiritual aspects of the human person, Frankl through an inner spiritual unconscious and Jung through a deeper collective unconscious.² Both men included a concept of transcendence in their work.³ Given Frankl's contention that logotherapy could be combined with many other forms of therapy, it seems curious that more work comparing logotherapy with Jungian approaches is not more common.⁴

Frankl credits Jung for discovering religious elements within the unconscious, but criticizes him for considering them to be instinctual and impersonal, that is, archetypal and collective. (Archetypes for Jung are unconscious mythological themes or primordial images shared by all human beings).⁵ Frankl calls this Jung's "great mistake."⁶ For Frankl, unconscious religious elements belong to an existential and personal area. This

¹ Frankl, *Recollections*, 113; Spiegelman, "C. G. Jung's Answer to Job," 196.

² Frankl, *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*, 31; Carl G. Jung, "The Structure of the Psyche," in *Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol. 8*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (London: Routledge, 1958), ¶ 321.

³ Frankl, *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*, 59; Carl G. Jung, "Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation," in *Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol. 9*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (London: Routledge, 1958), ¶ 524.

⁴ Frankl, *On the Theory and Therapy of Mental Disorders*, 185; Frankl, *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*, 47.

⁵ Carl G. Jung, "The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious," in *Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol. 9*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (London: Routledge, 1958), ¶ 5; Anthony Storr, *The Essential Jung* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 16.

⁶ Frankl, *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*, 70.

means that the spiritual unconscious is not part of the mind-body organism. It operates through decisions rather than drives; it is intensely personal rather than universal. Indeed, Frankl refers to religious belief as the most personal decision that a human being makes. While religious forms are transmitted to future generations through culture, according to Frankl, each individual must embrace these forms and fill them with her own existential meaning.⁷

In explaining his differences with Jung, Frankl recounts the following exchange: “Once I was asked after one of my lectures whether I did not admit that there were such things as religious archetypes, since it was remarkable that all primitive peoples ultimately reached an identical concept of God, and this could after all only be explained with the help of a God-archetype.” Frankl responded, “I asked my questioner whether there were such a thing as a Four-archetype. He did not understand immediately, and so I said, ‘Look here, all people discover independently that two and two make four—we do not need an archetype for an explanation—perhaps two and two really do make four. And perhaps we do not need a divine archetype to explain human religion either—perhaps God really does exist.’”⁸

⁷ Frankl, *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*, 70-72.

⁸ Viktor E. Frankl, *The Feeling of Meaninglessness* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2010), 219.