

On the Nature of the Psyche

Condensed Study Companion — paragraphs 381–395 and side-lights

Distilled from the close-reading sessions · Jung, CW 8 · August 2026

How to use this document. Each section compresses many sessions into the shortest form that still teaches. Read the diagram first, then the text; the *memory hooks* at the end of each part are the lines to rehearse. Paragraph numbers (para.) refer to CW 8 and are identical in every edition.

1. The essay at a glance

1-2 The problem

Is there an unconscious at all? Old objections answered

3 Dissociability

The psyche splits easily; unity is built, not given

4 The psychoid

Beyond both ends of the psyche: the unknowable ground

5 Conscious / unconscious

Both are matters of degree - the dimmer, the moon, the archipelago

6 Multiple luminosities

Sparks, stars, eyes: the lit, ordered, watching dark

HERE

7 Instinct and archetype

The image is the meaning of the instinct; the violet

8 Consequences

Three outcomes of the flood; individuation; the two cones

On the Nature of the Psyche - one line per section

One line per section. Sections 1–5 are behind you; Section 6 is one paragraph from complete.

2. Conscious and unconscious: degrees, not compartments (para. 381–387)

The licence (para. 381). Physics survived “wave AND particle”; psychology may hold “conscious AND unconscious.” Everything that follows is offered as a **model** — a way of seeing, not a metaphysical claim.

The definition (para. 382). The unconscious is the **unknown psychic** — not the unknown in general. Its near province (the “fringe”) holds five things: what I am not thinking of now; what I have forgotten; what I perceived but never noticed; what I do involuntarily; and *all the future things taking shape in me* (the prospective clause — gold for the paper). Beyond the fringe lies the **psychoid**: never knowable directly, only by effects.

The two media (para. 383). A content in consciousness can be **corrected** — it loses automatism, becomes a dialogue partner. The same content in the unconscious is **conserved** — unchanged, compulsive, and self-amplifying toward mythological form the deeper it sinks (the “red-shift,” para. 384). Hence the therapeutic factor: making conscious.

Consciousness is a dimmer, not a switch



Every content is a moon



No content is totally conscious - every known thing trails a dark side (para. 383-385)

Left: consciousness has intensities — the autopilot drive is “I do this” without “I am conscious of doing this.”
Right: every content keeps a dark face turned away from the ego.



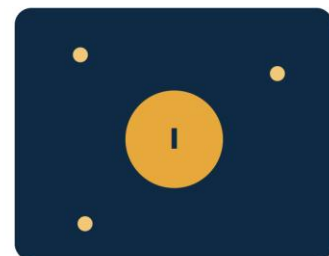
1. Baby

flashes of awareness, no I yet



2. Growing up

the flashes join into one I



3. Adult

a few glows stay outside forever

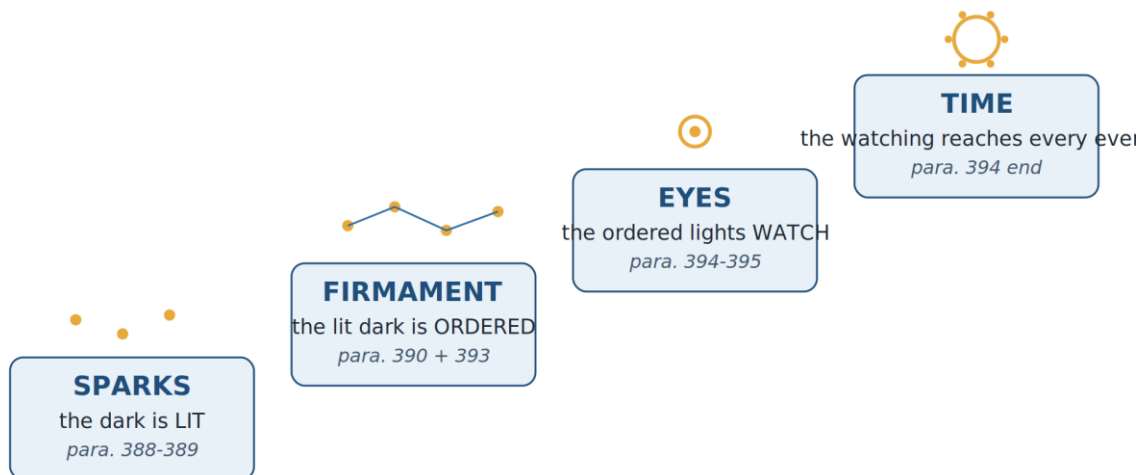
The archipelago (para. 387): the ego is built from islands - and new islands can still join

Approximative consciousness (para. 386–387): awareness precedes the ego — you did it yourself as a baby; some ownerless glows remain all your life; therapy still annexes new islands.

Memory hooks: *model, not assertion · unknown psychic · five fringe items · corrected vs conserved · dimmer, not switch · every content is a moon · archipelago — the ego is the biggest island, not a different substance.*

3. The multiple luminosities (para. 388–395)

The claim: the dark of the mind holds many faint points of awareness. **Two clues:** (1) the unconscious *behaves* as if dimly aware (it perceives, chooses, plans); (2) whenever the psyche pictures its own dark region — in dreams now, in old texts then — it paints *darkness full of little lights*. Independent convergence across centuries is the evidence.



Section 6 in one climb - each step is a stronger claim; the last step seeds SYNCHRONICITY

Each image-upgrade carries a stronger claim about the unconscious: lit → structured → perceiving → woven into time.

The witnesses, one line each

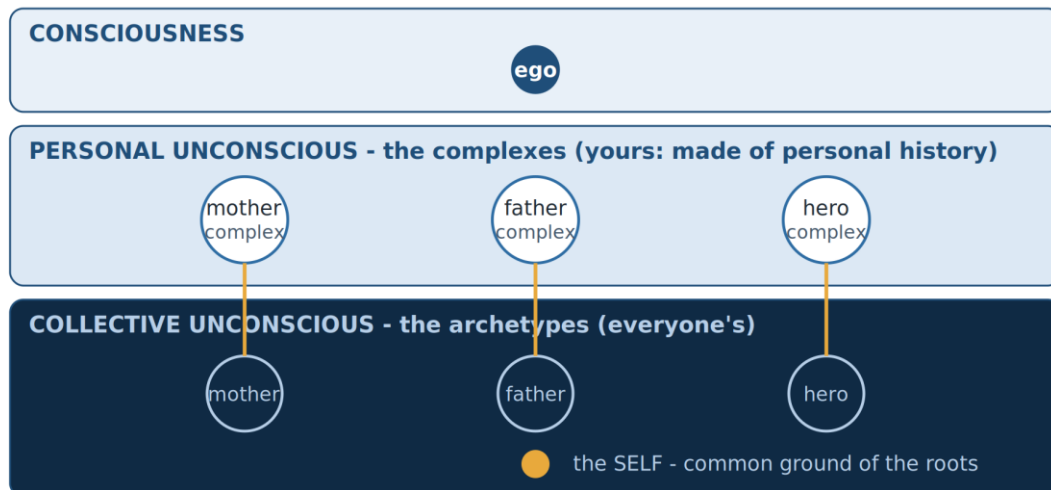
Witness	What they add
Aurora consurgens (15th c.)	White sparks in the foul black earth: first light appears at the worst stage (the nigredo).
Khunrath (c. 1600)	The sparks are splinters of the world-soul; the dark chaos is a “seed plot of a world to come” — a nursery, not a graveyard.
Dorn (16th c.)	Sparks gather “day by day” into one light (individuation). The light is “in us, not of us” — we host it, never own it.
Paracelsus	The inner firmament: everyone is a star; one light divided among all (the collective unconscious, 1584). Reason IS the light.
Morienus / Ripley	Fish’s eyes: cook the dark matter until the eyes appear; when the sea dries, the glitter remains (fish-eye → gold → sun → God’s eye).
Zechariah 4:10 / 3:9	Seven eyes of the Lord = the seven planets, never resting; one stone bearing seven eyes — the lapis that watches.
Argus / Draco	Two engineering of total vigilance: many eyes (some always open) or one circumpolar watcher that never sets. Part of the psyche never sleeps.
Ignatius of Loyola	The serpent “full of eyes, which were yet no eyes” — quasi-consciousness seen raw, with no third box (psyche) yet available. Wrong ontology, sound triage (judge by fruits).

Purusha / Monoimos	The thousand-eyed Cosmic Man; the dot with many eyes that is the All — the self as one-and-many, point-and-cosmos.
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The final fuse (para. 394 end): an eye that misses nothing must be present at every event; only **time** is present at every event; so the All-Seeing = Time — the archetypes are woven into happening itself. That sentence seeds **synchronicity** (the scarab at the window; full essay in the autumn).

Memory hooks: *sparks in the muck · seedbed, not graveyard · numinosity entails luminosity (what grips also glows) · your mind is a spark too · one light, divided among all · the dark is watching · the ego is a setting star; something at the Pole stays up.*

4. The anatomy of the psyche (the teaching diagrams)

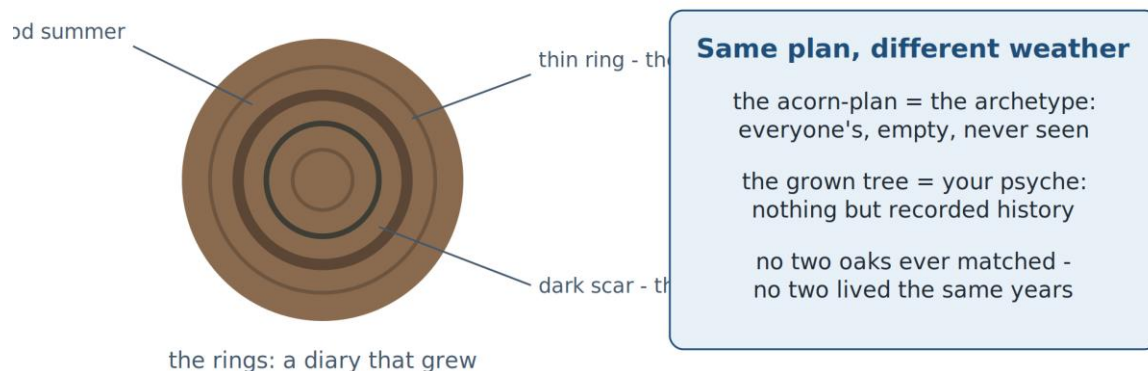


The archetype is the nucleus of the complex: the root is everyone's, the fruit is only yours

The complex is the personal face of the archetype. Deeper sinking = closer to the archetypal nucleus = more mythological costume (the red-shift, in plumbing).

Same anatomy at other scales: **von Franz's islands** (many peaks above the waterline, one mountain and one floor below — between people) and the **night sky** (stars = archetypes; brightest star = ego; pole star = self — within one person). Your clinical verb **“to constellate”** descends from this: a complex activating = psychic stars arranging into their fixed figure.

5. Individuality is not lost



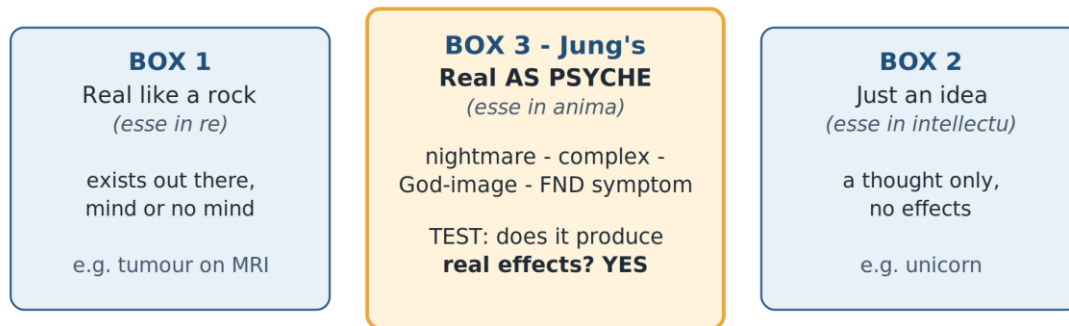
Individuality is not lost: personal history is the only part of the psyche you can see

Not “same ingredients, different mix” — same plan, different weather. The middle band of the layers diagram is the tree's rings.

The scholastic guarantee, if wanted: Duns Scotus's **haecceitas** ("thisness") — uniqueness as an irreducible positive, not a mixture; the very word "individuation" descends from the medieval *principium individuationis*.

6. The third box (esse in anima)

The question "is it real?" needs three boxes, not two

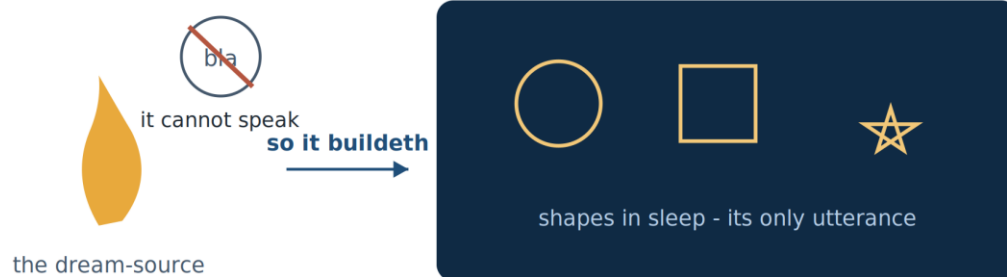


"Your symptom is real even though the scan is clean" = Box 3, spoken in clinic
Abelard's habit - build a third box when two fail - became Jung's foundation

Ignatius had only Boxes God/Devil in 1522; the psyche-box arrived four centuries late. FND is Box-3 medicine, practised daily.

Abelard in three lines: Breton knight's son turned logician; unhorsed both his teachers (universals are neither things nor noise but *meanings* grounded in real resemblance); loved Héloïse, was mutilated for it, burned his own book at Soissons, was condemned at Sens — and his third-box habit matured into Jung's *esse in anima*, the ground of the whole psychology. Reading tool: when an archetype-sentence feels grand, ask which box it sits in (*ante rem* / *in re* / *post rem*); keep your own paper's claims in the middle one.

7. Dreams and the JAP paper



The SHAPE is the message: read a mute builder by watching its forms change (para. 391 + 402)

Nothing is hidden behind the image — a mute source can only build, so form-watching is the only adequate reading.

SDA is not a translator. It is the EEG of the dream series: form-description of a signal whose source cannot speak — characterising morphology, never substituting hidden meanings. Not one clever option among many, but the method the material demands.

Citation goldmine (all CW 8, ‘On the nature of the psyche’)

Paragraph	What it gives the paper
para. 366	Sign vs symbol: the symbol always expresses the not-yet-known.
para. 382	The prospective unconscious, stated definitionally: “all the future things taking shape in me.”
para. 388	The same idea historically: the dark as “seed plot of a world to come.”
para. 391	Paracelsus: the light “cannot speak” and so “buildeth shapes in sleep” — form is the utterance.
para. 398	“The image represents the meaning of the instinct” — form before content.
para. 402	“Image and meaning are identical; as the first takes shape, the latter becomes clear.” The spine, with 391.

How to cite: in text — (Jung 1947/1954, para. 402); if the words are Paracelsus’s — (Paracelsus, cited in Jung 1947/1954, para. 391). In the references, one entry serves all: *Jung, C.G. (1947/1954). ‘On the nature of the psyche’. CW 8. Paragraph, never page; only the source you actually read gets an entry; CW 8 lives in the reference entry, not the bracket.*

8. The practice card

1 Find what still glitters Ripley's dried sea: in the darkest case, hunt the one image with life - start there	2 Open the night mail dreams = an inner observer's report: keep the journal, consult it when stuck
3 Gather spark by spark Dorn: growth is accretion, not lightning - honour small realisations; they ARE it	4 Carry, don't claim Christopher: bearer, not owner - the guard against inflation and against burnout
5 Judge by fruits Ignatius: track any fascination over time - does it deepen, or flatter and dry?	6 Read in series the firmament: never one dream alone - track returns and form across time (SDA)

Treat the dark as a sky, not a cellar - consult it, gather from it, carry what it gives

The whole of Section 6 converted into six working tools.

The three outcomes of the flood (para. 430, pre-read): same rising unconscious, three egos — **integration** (withstands and is relativised: Christopher, bearer not owner), **inflation** (“I am it”: puffed-up ego, deflated self), **dissolution** (too weak: swept away — abaissement, possession, mass-contagion). Triage question: which outcome is this ego heading for? Fragile egos need ego-building before depth.

The night watchman in practice: commission the night shift (pose the stuck question before sleep); pad by the bed (the dawn report evaporates); permission to go off duty (for insomnia: the watch is kept regardless); no one is wholly abandoned (hope with a mechanism); dig where the dragon coils (fiercest resistance = address of the treasure).

9. Pocket glossary

Term	One line
esse in anima	“Being in the soul” — real as psyche: neither rock nor mere idea; the third box.
fringe / psychoid	Reachable unconscious vs the never-reachable ground known only by effects.
lumen naturae	The light of nature: inborn inner illumination — “in us, not of us.”
luminosity / numinosity	The faint glow of quasi-awareness / the gripping charge — they come together.
mundus archetypus	The archetypal world — the ordered inner firmament.

nigredo / albedo	Alchemy's blackening (rot, the worst stage) and whitening (first dawn) — the sparks appear inside the nigredo.
cauda pavonis	The peacock's tail: all colours at once before the whitening — Argus's eyes displayed (deposit for CW 12).
scintilla(e)	Spark(s): the luminosities in alchemical dress; the One Spark = the self.
synchronicity	Meaningful coincidence of inner and outer without causal link — archetypes organising moments (autumn essay).
aīōn	Boundless time; the uroboros; the lion-headed Mithraic time-god — the title of CW 9ii, born in these footnotes.